



Whitepaper

# From Chaos to Clarity

How Microsoft Fabric helps SMEs get  
more value from their data



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# A smarter way to find value in data

Data is the backbone of business decision-making. Yet for many small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), managing data effectively feels like an uphill battle.

Data silos, fragmented tools, limited resources, escalating costs, and the pressure to integrate AI capabilities often leave organisations struggling to keep pace with competitors. These challenges don't just slow growth - they limit the ability to innovate, correlate insights, and make confident business decisions.

For SMEs, the perceived solution is often a complete and costly cloud transformation. But this “all-or-nothing” approach isn't always practical. Many operate in transitional phases, balancing on-premises legacy systems with cloud aspirations. This is where Microsoft Fabric changes the game.

Microsoft Fabric offers SMEs an adaptable, unified analytics platform that works with hybrid environments. It simplifies data management, reduces costs, and makes advanced capabilities - like AI integration - accessible to organisations without requiring a full cloud migration.

Fabric's flexibility ensures that small and medium businesses can adopt cutting-edge tools without breaking the bank or overhauling existing operations.

**According to an initial 2023 study, Fabric has been shown to increase data engineer and data scientist productivity by up to 50% and business analyst productivity by up to 15%.**

In this whitepaper, we'll explore how SMEs can overcome common data challenges and unlock new opportunities with Microsoft Fabric.

You'll learn why this innovative platform dispels outdated myths, what sets it apart from traditional tools, and how the right technology partner's expertise can help ensure you achieve the best results.

**If your organisation is ready to make smarter, faster decisions while staying agile, this guide is for you.**



# What's really holding you back?

For SMEs, data should be a powerful driver of growth and innovation. But too often, it becomes a source of frustration.

The barriers to effective data management are numerous, and they don't just slow down operations - they impede progress.



## Data silos and fragmentation

Many SMEs struggle to consolidate data scattered across different departments, systems, and tools. This lack of integration makes it difficult to extract meaningful insights.



## Scalability

Rapid growth can overwhelm existing systems. As data volumes increase, SMEs face challenges in scaling infrastructure without spiralling costs.



## AI integration

While AI promises transformative potential, many SMEs struggle with integrating AI capabilities into their workflows due to cost, expertise, or infrastructure gaps.



## Skill gaps

Limited in-house expertise creates barriers to using modern data tools effectively.



## Complexity of multiple tools

The proliferation of disconnected tools adds to the challenge. Managing a fragmented data estate consumes resources and makes workflows unnecessarily complicated.



## Cost management

Budget constraints often force SMEs to make compromises, such as sticking to outdated systems or patching together solutions that are neither scalable nor efficient.



## Real-time analytics

SMEs often lack the ability to derive real-time insights from their data, slowing decision-making.



## Data governance and security

Ensuring data privacy and regulatory compliance adds another layer of complexity, particularly for SMEs with lean IT teams.

Overcoming these challenges requires more than a piecemeal approach - it demands a solution that simplifies, unifies, and future-proofs data management.



# Microsoft Fabric explained

Microsoft Fabric is a unified, end-to-end analytics platform designed to transform the way organisations manage and get the most from their data.

For SMEs, it offers a comprehensive solution that simplifies data management by bringing together all key aspects of the analytics lifecycle - data integration, engineering, data science, business intelligence and real-time analytics - into a single, seamless environment.

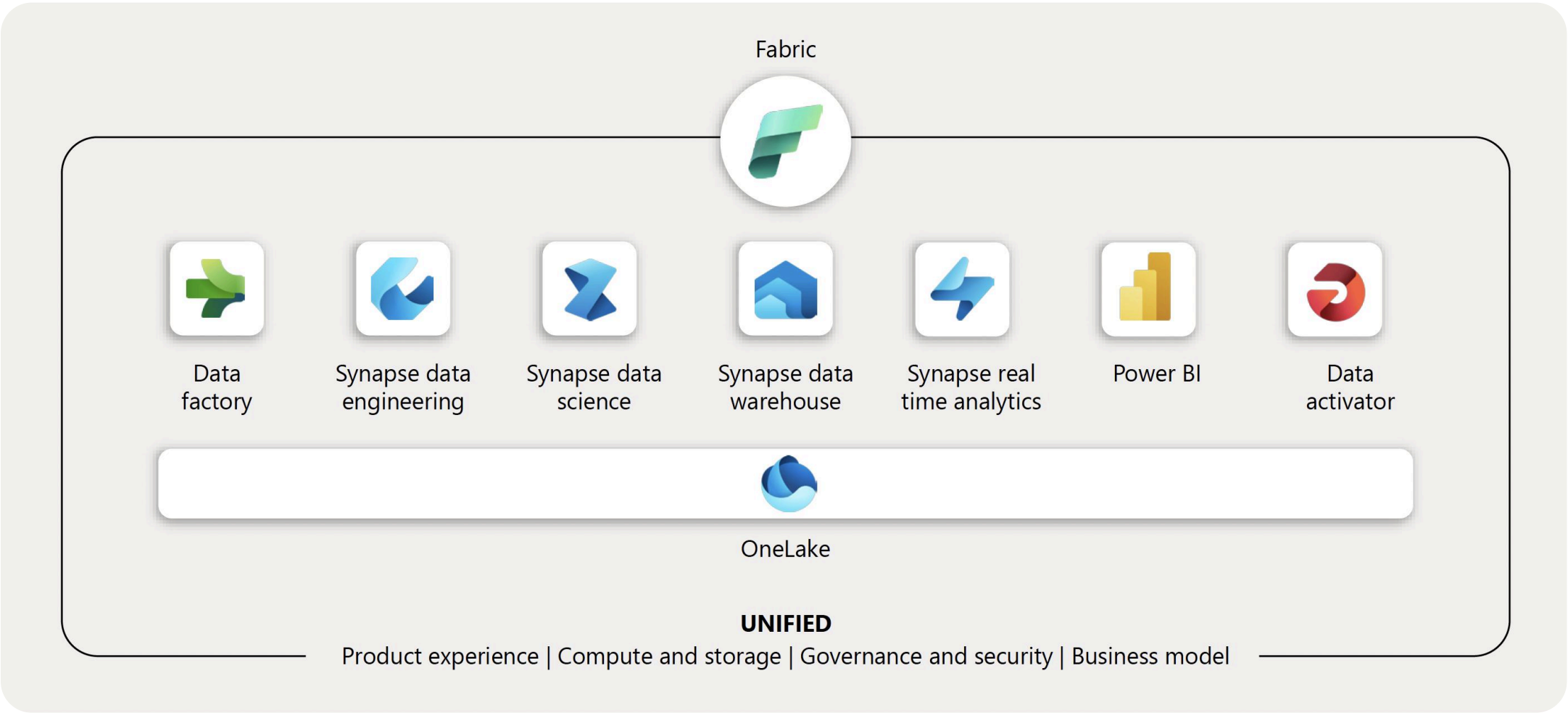
At the core of Microsoft Fabric is OneLake, a centralised data repository that eliminates the complexity of scattered data silos. OneLake helps businesses consolidate data into a unified space, simplifying access, reducing duplication, and providing a single source of truth.

With features like Shortcuts, SMEs can seamlessly integrate on-prem and multi-cloud data sources, including AWS and soon GCP, into Fabric without compromising performance.

“The great thing about Fabric is that it cuts through the complexity of traditional analytics by unifying all your data tools into one seamless platform.

Additionally, it opens up new frontiers by unlocking AI potential - connecting data effortlessly to advanced Azure AI and GenAI Services which we use to transform raw data into powerful, innovative solutions for our customers.”

Florin Preda, Director of Technical Services, Data & AI Apps at Nasstar.



## Fabric’s interconnected tools amplify its value:

- ◆ **Power BI** delivers intuitive, powerful business intelligence capabilities.
- ◆ **Data Factory** streamlines data integration and transformation workflows.
- ◆ **Synapse Analytics** powers data engineering, data warehousing, and real-time analytics.

Together, these tools offer SMEs an integrated ecosystem that eliminates the need for multiple standalone platforms. Fabric is a SaaS solution that doesn’t just modernise data management - it makes advanced analytics and AI accessible, scalable, and cost-effective for organisations of all sizes.



# Five Microsoft Fabric myths quashed

Despite its growing popularity, Microsoft Fabric is often misunderstood. Here, we debunk five common myths that may be holding your organisation back from unlocking its full potential.

By understanding these misconceptions, it hopefully should be clear to you that Microsoft Fabric bridges the gap between cutting-edge analytics and real-world practicality.

It offers a cost-effective, scalable, and accessible solution to modern data management - empowering businesses to innovate without overextending their resources, both people and financial.

**Next, we'll look more closely at why Fabric is extremely effective for SMEs in particular.**

## Myth 1

**“Microsoft Fabric requires a full cloud transition”**

### The Truth

Fabric is built to support hybrid environments, making it ideal for SMEs in transitional phases. You can integrate existing on-prem systems with the cloud seamlessly using features like the On-Premises Data Gateway.

This hybrid capability allows businesses to modernise at their own pace while maintaining legacy systems that still deliver value.

## Myth 2

**“Fabric is just another cloud data tool”**

### The Truth

Fabric is much more than a cloud data tool. It's a unified analytics platform that integrates key capabilities like data integration, engineering, real-time analytics, data science, and business intelligence.

By consolidating these functions into one ecosystem, Fabric reduces the need for multiple standalone tools, simplifying data management while improving efficiency.

## Myth 3

**“It's only built for large enterprise companies”**

### The Truth

Microsoft Fabric is designed to be scalable for organisations of all sizes. SMEs can start small, focusing on their immediate needs, and scale up as their business grows.

Fabric's intuitive interface ensures that even smaller teams can harness its power without being overwhelmed by complexity.

## Myth 4

**“It requires too much heavy technical expertise”**

### The Truth

Fabric's SaaS model simplifies deployment and management, making it accessible to both data experts and non-experts.

Unlike traditional platforms that require complex setup and maintenance, Fabric is cloud-native easy to use. Built-in tools like Power BI, natural language processing capabilities, and native integration with Azure AI Services ensure that SMEs can use advanced analytics and AI without needing a dedicated team of data scientists.

## Myth 5

**“It's too expensive for us to implement”**

### The Truth

Fabric is designed with affordability in mind. Its pay-as-you-go model means that SMEs only pay for the features and capacity they actually use.

Businesses can start small, with plans beginning at approximately £150 per month\*, making it accessible for SMEs without significant upfront investment. By eliminating the need for multiple standalone tools, Fabric reduces overall IT spend while delivering a higher return on investment.

\*Prices as of February 2025

# Helping SMEs change the game

Microsoft Fabric redefines what's possible for SMEs, addressing key data challenges while delivering transformational value. Its unified platform consolidates tools, simplifies workflows, and empowers businesses to unlock actionable insights with minimal complexity or cost.

- ◆ **Simplifies data management and analytics**  
Fabric integrates data tools, workflows, and analytics into one unified platform, eliminating the need for multiple disconnected solutions. This streamlined approach reduces complexity, accelerates insights, and enables SMEs to make smarter, faster decisions.
- ◆ **Ensures end-to-end integration**  
By seamlessly and securely connecting data across systems, Fabric eliminates the need for extensive infrastructure or time-consuming manual integration. Whether dealing with on-prem, multi-cloud, or hybrid environments, Fabric ensures your data flows effortlessly between platforms and departments.

- ◆ **OneLake reduces data movement**  
At the heart of Fabric is OneLake, a centralised data repository that eliminates the need for duplication. OneLake allows SMEs to store data in one place, integrate it easily with features like Shortcuts, and keep it accessible and consistent. This approach improves efficiency, reduces storage costs, and minimises time wasted on managing fragmented data.
- ◆ **Enhances collaboration and productivity**  
Fabric empowers teams by providing easy access to data and insights, fostering collaboration across departments. With intuitive tools like Power BI, teams can analyse data in real time without worrying about managing complex infrastructure. The result is a more aligned, agile organisation.

“

**When you partner with us, you gain a trusted ally who simplifies data challenges and accelerates AI adoption.**

Whether you're looking to optimise operations, reduce costs, or unlock new opportunities, we ensure your Microsoft Fabric journey delivers lasting impact.”

**Florin Preda**, Director of Technical Services, Data & AI Apps at Nasstar.

# Helping SMEs change the game

## ◆ Future-proofed for AI

Fabric also integrates seamlessly with Azure AI Services, enabling SMEs to unlock AI-driven opportunities like predictive analytics and process automation. By connecting data directly to AI tools, Fabric accelerates innovation without requiring costly upgrades or bespoke development. It ensures that SMEs remain competitive in a rapidly evolving landscape.

## ◆ Proven ROI

The benefits of Fabric go beyond its technical features.

This impressive return underscores how Fabric enables SMEs to achieve more with less, from optimising workflows to scaling AI capabilities.

## ◆ Improves security and compliance

Security and compliance are built into the fabric of the platform. Microsoft Purview works alongside Fabric to provide enterprise-grade data governance, compliance, and security. Automated features like data classification, sensitivity labelling, and encryption reduce risk and simplify regulatory compliance, allowing SMEs to focus on growth.

## ◆ SaaS simplicity

Unlike traditional Platform as a Service (PaaS) solutions, Fabric's Software as a Service (SaaS) model eliminates the overhead of infrastructure management. SMEs can leverage the platform's capabilities without needing to manage servers, scale resources manually, or hire specialised IT staff. Instead, they can focus entirely on delivering outcomes and driving business impact.

**An even more recent Forrester Total Economic Impact study, from 2024, found that Microsoft Fabric delivers an ROI of 379% over three years.**



# Choose the right partner for your data transformation

SMEs looking to harness the full potential of Microsoft Fabric need more than just the license - they need a partner who understands how to align innovative technology with business objectives.

With over a decade of experience as a trusted Microsoft Partner, Nasstar combines deep expertise in the Microsoft ecosystem with a proven track record of delivering transformative solutions for clients.

## The Nasstar offering

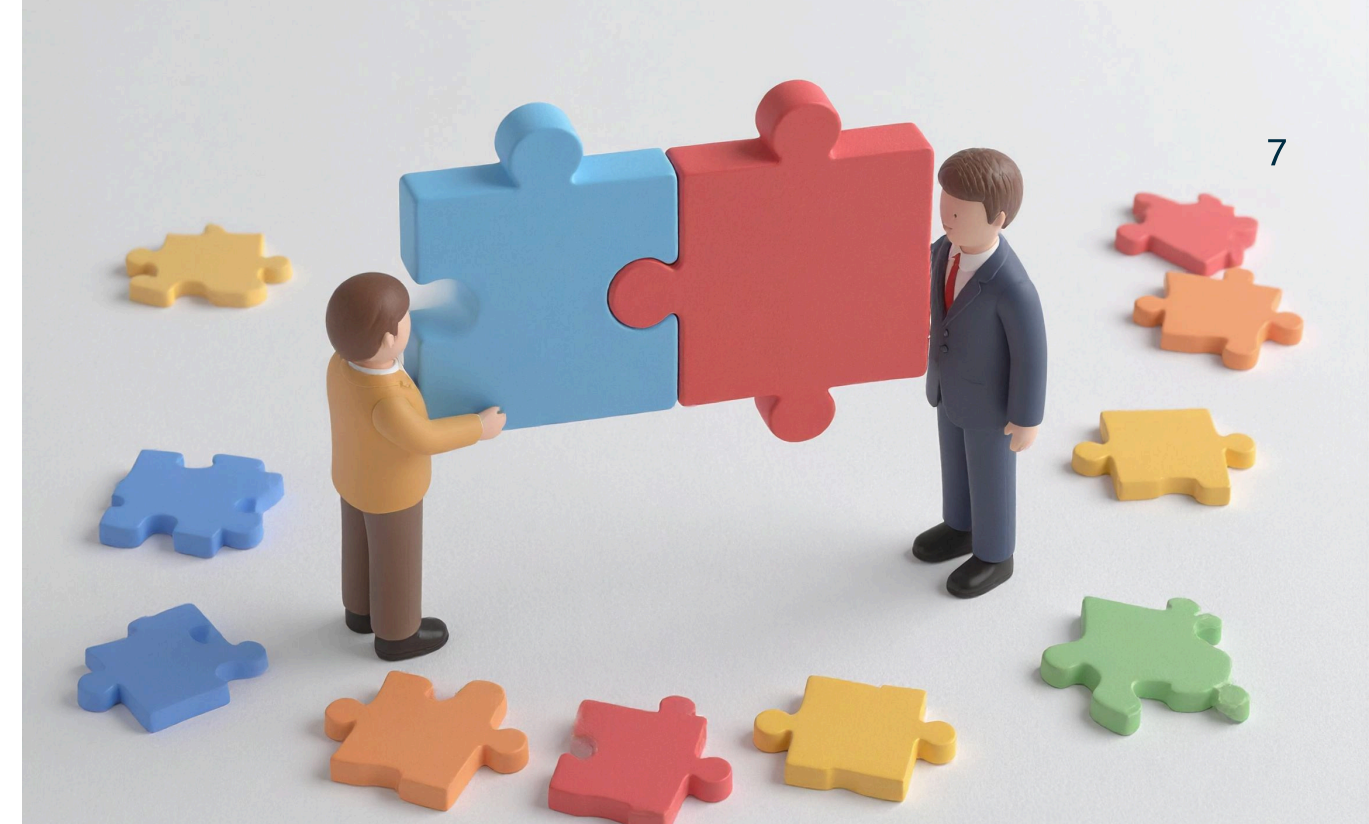
We use our extensive knowledge of data analytics and Microsoft Fabric to deliver products that act as value accelerators for data and AI workloads. By simplifying data integration and analytics, we help SMEs achieve faster time to value while keeping costs manageable. Fabric's integration with Azure AI Services is central to our approach, enabling SMEs to create effective data pipelines for faster AI development and deployment. This unlocks use cases such as personalised customer experiences and Agentic AI workflows.

To ensure every project is tailored to your needs, we offer discovery workshops that assess your current data landscape, identify business pain points, and uncover opportunities for AI-driven innovation. These workshops lay the foundation for integrating Fabric and AI into your business, ensuring a seamless transition from legacy systems to a modern, unified platform.

## Don't just implement, integrate

We'll take the process one step further by helping you integrate Fabric into your broader business strategy to ensure long-term success. By combining technical expertise with a deep understanding of your business goals, we provide tailored solutions that deliver tangible results.

- ◆ A strategic Microsoft Partner: With over 10 years of collaboration with Microsoft, our team brings unparalleled insights into the ecosystem, ensuring best-in-class service.
- ◆ Proven expertise: Our multi-disciplinary teams of data engineers, AI specialists, and solution architects work seamlessly to unlock the potential of your data.
- ◆ Continuous innovation: We offer ongoing support and managed services to ensure your Fabric implementation evolves as your business grows.



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**What I really love about Fabric is that it removes the traditional “noise” of implementing analytics solutions.**

**It's an elegant SaaS solution that enables our teams to focus on the most important thing for our customers: maximising the value of their data, as soon as possible.”**

**Florin Preda, Director of Technical Services, Data & AI Apps at Nasstar.**

## Case Studies

While we're introducing Microsoft Fabric as a new offering, there are already some early case studies from Microsoft that highlight the transformative potential of Fabric across industries:



### Major retailer reduces operational costs by 30%

By unifying its analytics estate with Fabric, a leading retailer achieved a 30% reduction in operational costs.

Real-time insights embedded directly into Teams allowed the business to optimise inventory management and boost revenue through personalised customer experiences.



### Healthcare provider cuts patient readmissions by 40%

A healthcare provider used predictive analytics powered by Fabric to gain real-time visibility into patient data.

With dashboards delivering actionable insights, care teams were able to reduce patient readmissions by 40%, improving outcomes while cutting costs.



### Leading bank slashes analytics processing time by 50%

A major bank improved fraud detection accuracy and reduced analytics processing time by 50% by leveraging Fabric's AI capabilities.

This has enabled more precise customer segmentation and the introduction of predictive risk models, delivering significant operational efficiencies.

# Our approach to accelerating your AI adoption

A typical engagement with us spans 4-6 weeks, moving from discovery to adoption. We work closely with you to assess your data landscape, develop a proof of value, and create a tailored adoption plan.



 **Discovery & Readiness**




Objectives

- ◆ Understand business goals, identify AI opportunities, and assess data readiness

Activities

- ◆ Run workshops, align AI use cases with objectives, and review systems and data




Outcomes

-  Compelling business case for fabric and AI
-  Data landscape assessment
-  Prioritised list of Fabric/AI use cases

 **Proof of Value**

- ◆ Prove Fabric’s value through a pilot and secure stakeholder buy-in



- ◆ Select a key use case, deploy a pilot, and refine based on feedback

-  Validate value hypothesis with real-world data
-  Tangible proof of Fabric's value and business buy-in
-  Working Fabric solution, ready for AI

 **Adoption Plan**

- ◆ Define a vision, address key needs, and create a roadmap for scaling

- ◆ Develop a business case, recommend resources, and map a scaling plan

-  Actionable plan and clear vision for adopting Fabric/AI
-  Key considerations for future Fabric/AI investments



# Want to get more from your data?

Microsoft Fabric can revolutionise data management for SMEs by simplifying complex landscapes, enhancing collaboration, and providing cost-effective, scalable AI-driven insights. It addresses current data challenges while preparing for future opportunities.

Adopting Fabric is just the beginning. To unlock its full potential, you need a partner who understands your business and can integrate Fabric into your operations.

With over 10 years as a Microsoft Partner and a strong track record in data and AI solutions, we're here to guide you.

Start with a free one-hour discovery call to see how Fabric can transform your business.

We'll help you check your eligibility for a workshop with Microsoft and Nasstar to assess your challenges and opportunities.

## Contact us to schedule your free discovery session.

- Talk to one of Microsoft Fabric specialists
- Assess your data goals and challenges
- Explore funding eligibility
- Outline recommended next steps

Contact us



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