

Instacart:

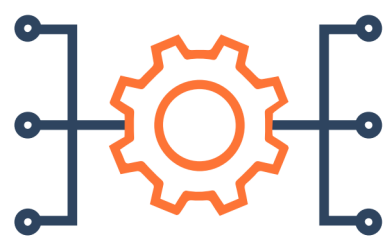
Accelerating Data Integration, Launching More Retailers Faster



THE RESULTS



Reduced launch time by 2 months



Automated data engineering for a 748% retail partner increase



Faster data abnormality detection



5X reduction in data engineering maintenance work



Industry: Grocery Delivery

Founded: 2012

Headquarters: San Francisco, CA

INTRODUCTION

Instacart is the largest online grocery marketplace in North America, with more than 80,000 store locations and over 1,400 retail partners, collectively representing over 85% of the U.S. grocery market. As an early Nexla customer, Instacart relies on Nexla for data integration, particularly through a nearly 8-fold increase in retail partners from 2017 to 2023.

THE CHALLENGE

Instacart has seen drastic expansions in the number of key retail partnerships and the number of store locations throughout the years. The fast-paced growth substantially increased the workload of data pipeline building and maintenance for its data engineering team and required Instacart to move faster to power its platform.

THE SOLUTION

Using Nexla, Instacart was able to dramatically accelerate the retail partner onboarding and get to market faster. Nexla's universal connector allows Instacart to automate the pipeline-building process and flow accurate product and pricing data from retail partners into Instacart's database with ease. As a result, Instacart provides a better experience for both retailers and customers.



**For partners
with unique or
unusual
requirements,
Nexla has
helped reduce
our launch time
by one to two
months.”**

— Elliot Schmukler, Vice
President, Product, Instacart

INTEGRATION AT A BROADER SCALE

“Nexla’s expertise in data transformation frees my teams to focus on building the best possible catalog of grocery products.”

— James McNalley, Director of Catalog Engineering, Instacart

Founded in 2012, Instacart has been quickly growing its grocery delivery service. In the past several years Instacart enormous expansion: 748% in partnerships and 484% in market share. This growth created more work for its data engineering team, while its ambitious goals required Instacart to move faster. To power its platform, Instacart integrates with retailer APIs, FTP servers, and all manner of data sources and formats. In order to integrate with retail partners, Instacart adapts to the retailer’s data reality—sometimes standard, sometimes niche, and varies for each partner.

Instacart has robust internal systems to interface with retailers and creates tailored solutions to meet the unique needs of each retail partner. Despite that, with a steady stream of new retailers coming on board quickly, the complexity of requirements increased and created more work for the engineering team. As Instacart’s growth accelerated, the company decided to partner with Nexla to help automate the integration processes and complement existing internal systems while allowing the engineering team to focus on high-priority projects.

SPEED AND QUALITY

“Nexla makes sharing data between companies, in any format, really easy.”

— Brandon Leonardo, Co-Founder, Instacart

“We’re a fast-growing company,” said Elliot Shmukler, vice president of product at Instacart. “There’s always more work than the people available to do it, so prioritizing one-off or custom work is always a challenge.” Since every retailer’s data is different, such custom integration became a bottleneck. With Nexla’s innovative technology, Instacart complements its existing systems to support additional data sources and formats. “Nexla helps us make the integration process generic and scalable.”

Nexla’s data integration platform can connect to any data source and learn the data schemas and models, enabling users to easily automate the process of transforming data and delivering it to any destination, such as a database, data warehouse, or file. New data formats or unusual data sources are no longer gatekeepers for going to market. Engineers are happier too, as they can focus on the projects that provide the most leverage.

The ongoing maintenance and monitoring are also made easier with Nexla’s intelligent monitoring and alerting functionalities. Any changes in data formats or anomalies within data flows are automatically captured.

In addition, Nexla allows Instacart to process data at any speed, including batch, stream, and real-time. All these ensure the quality of data that enters Instacart’s system. For example, if a product goes out of stock, the related product SKU (stock-keeping unit) and catalog information are automatically updated in real time. When errors arise in the data provided by retail partners, Nexla recognizes them and sends an alert to ensure accurate product and pricing information in the app, providing a better experience for customers and retailers alike.

GETTING TO YES

Nexla has helped dramatically improve the partner roadmap. Retailers, engineers, and partner teams are happier, and Instacart gets to market faster. Instacart continues to find new ways to leverage the Nexla integration platform. “Our engineers often ask, ‘Isn’t this something Nexla can do now?’” said Shmukler.

The support from the Nexla team has been instrumental to the success of the partnership. “With the shared Slack channel, it feels like Nexla is part of the team,” commented Lauren Romaniuk, senior manager of data catalog at Instacart. Enterprise-grade support ensures that questions are answered quickly and issues are resolved promptly. This is crucial for enabling the teams to focus on the projects with the highest leverage in order to meet the growing demand.



SUMMARY

Instacart, powering the largest online grocery marketplace, leverages Nexla’s data integration automation to accelerate its 748% partnership expansion. As Instacart continues to advance in the online grocery sector, Nexla remains a crucial partner, supplying integration tools to support Instacart’s ongoing innovation and expansion.