Getting to the Core: Unlocking Value in **Data**.

How **Fruitways** created a stable data platform that enabled a single version of truth across its operations.

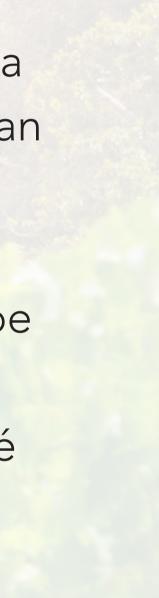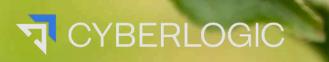Hendré Claassen, Group IT Manager
Fruitways

In the fertile winelands of South Africa, you'll find **Fruitways**, a specialist producer, packer, and marketer of fresh fruits, and an organisation that understands the importance and value of data. Knowing how integral their data was to their continued success, the instability of their data platform was proving to be a significant challenge. Facing that challenge head-on, was Hendré Claassen, the Group IT Manager at Fruitways. Hendré and his team were intent on creating a stable data platform that would provide the value they knew was there.

With multiple sites across the country and the different business units all operating in a decentralised manner, creating a single view of the truth was critical. But the existing data platform was unreliable, leading to data discrepancies. "People would walk into a meeting and one person would have one answer and another person would have a totally different answer based on the same data." Fruitways was a data-driven organisation without reliable data, and that had to change.

Although Fruitways initially cast the net wide when seeking a Business Intelligence (BI) partner, most of the vendors it had engaged with could not execute what was required. "Some people use a lot of buzzwords, but none of that matters if the solution doesn't work." Unlike those who dabbled in jargon and empty promises, it was clear to Hendré that Cyberlogic DataGeek understood the importance of aligning their solutions with the nuances of the Fruitways business landscape.

Walking the walk, together

In the commodities market, where margins are under constant pressure, cost management is paramount. In the spirit of financial prudence, the DataGeek team opted to reuse and optimise wherever possible. Cyberlogic DataGeek's Head Data Architect, Ian van Niekerk shared, "We tried to reuse as much of the existing infrastructure as possible."

We started with a proof of value or pilot phase, and things just worked out, so we evolved from there.

"We didn't want to do a cloud migration unnecessarily – sometimes, just because you can, doesn't mean you should." This ensured the technology investment aligned with the needs of the business, addressed their data challenges and avoided unnecessary expenditure.

The trust and alignment between Fruitways' experience and DataGeek's solutions quickly became evident. "We started with a proof of value or pilot phase, and things just worked out, so we evolved from there."

The real difference?

With the data foundation now largely in place, Fruitways is transitioning into a world where data flows seamlessly. The concept of loading only 'delta' data revolutionised their operations, bringing near-real-time decision-making into the equation. 'Delta', or 'delta encoding', is defined as storing or transmitting only the difference between two datasets, i.e., only the 'new' information each time a dataset is refreshed. This was something Fruitways had wanted for many years, but the instability of the previous environment had made it infeasible. "Suddenly our data store is not just an analytical tool giving a summary of what has happened, now we have an operational view that can be used in near-real-time, and I think that's a massive outcome." Hendré reflected.

Delta encoding enabled Fruitways to achieve a single version of the truth. The team was no longer struggling with contradictory information or missing pieces of the puzzle. This unlocked a new level of data-based decision-making.

Everybody talks about the single version of truth, but to get there is quite difficult and that's basically where we are now.
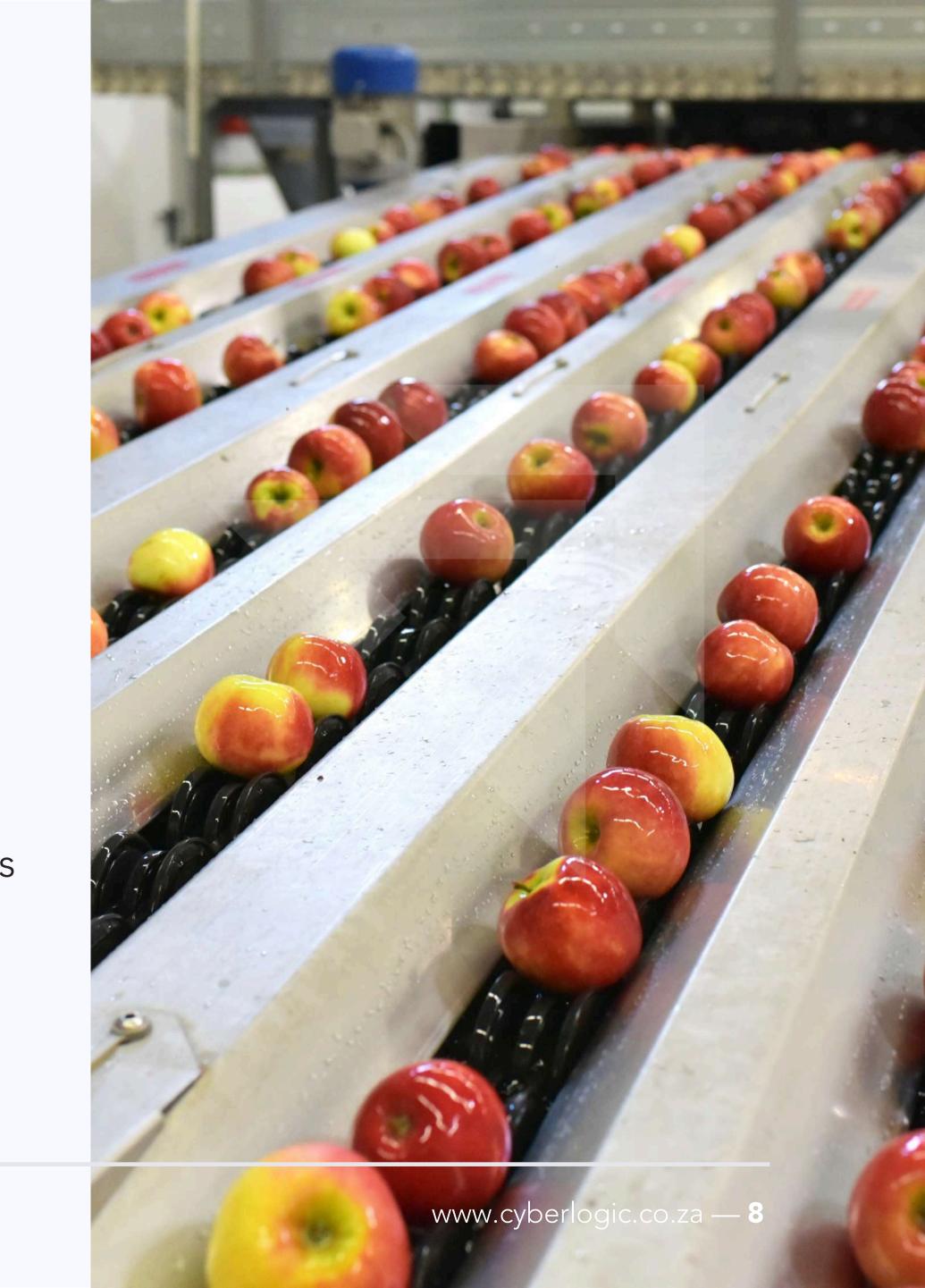
-Hendré Claassen, Group IT Manager
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A solid foundation

The partnership with Cyberlogic DataGeek is laying a strong foundation for future data initiatives at Fruitways. With improved reliability comes an 'always-on' availability of data, that will enable operational decisions based on near-real-time data. Data inconsistencies are becoming a thing of the past and there is a renewed sense of trust in the data that is so pivotal to how Fruitways operates.

While there are still a few phases of work to complete in the initial project, the team at Fruitways have already begun thinking about what comes next, "Where we started from was creating the operational underpinnings of the data infrastructure," Hendré shared, "we could then take that and scale it, ultimately moving into a space where we can start to do predictive analytics and play in the machine learning space."

Cyberlogic DataGeek's unwavering commitment to execution excellence will continue to be an important component in data initiatives at Fruitways. As Ian van Niekerk shared, "I think we partner very well with the Fruitways team because they are subject matter experts in the fruit space and we are subject matter experts in the data space— they know what questions to ask of the data and we know how to get the answers." By executing on the vision for data in Fruitways, Cyberlogic DataGeek is becoming a trusted partner in this data-driven journey, helping Fruitways overcome challenges, enhance reliability, and protect its bottom line.

To find out more about how Cyberlogic DataGeek can help your business harness the power of data to unlock exponential value, <u>get in touch</u>.