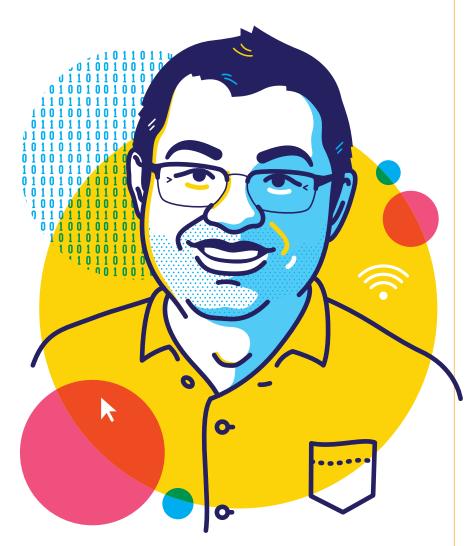TECHNOLOGY

# DATA WITH A PURPOSE

Alex Yastrebenetsky's InfoTrust is a "big data" darling looking to give back as it scales up.

*—AIESHA D. LITTLE*



During the tech recession of the early 2000s, the CEO of the company Alex Yastrebenetsky worked for flew into Cincinnati to announce that more than 200 of its employees were being laid off. At the time, he considered himself one of the lucky ones to still have a job at the end of the meeting. "It took me quite a few years afterwards to figure out what I wanted to do but, looking back, that was the day I realized I wanted to run my own business," says Yastrebenetsky, founder and CEO of the digital analytics consulting, data governance, and technology company InfoTrust.

Nearly 20 years later, InfoTrust is on the cutting edge of all things data, helping some of the largest Fortune 500 companies better understand who their online customers are, how to best engage with them, and how to collect their data while staying compliant with digital privacy laws. Next year, the company will launch InfoTrust Labs, an in-house innovation center where employees can experiment with disruptive technologies and learn the latest methodologies, systems, and processes. "Even though our clients are typically very large organizations, they're all experimenting with new technologies and new processes to speed up bringing new products to market," Yastrebenetsky says. "We want to become experts in innovation so not only can we innovate our own products and services, we can continue supporting our clients' initiatives."

Over the years, Yastrebenetsky—who immigrated to the U.S. as a teenager from Kharkiv, Ukraine, and studied computer engineering at the University of Cincinnati—has built a strong sense of philanthropy into InfoTrust's company culture. He recently released *Crawl, Walk, Run: Advancing Analytics Maturity with Google Marketing Platform*, which he co-authored with InfoTrust Chief Marketing Officer Michael Loban. The two are donating 100 percent of the book's sales to the InfoTrust Foundation, which supports causes throughout the region, including Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. The company celebrated the book's launch by donating $20,000 to the nonprofit. The goal is to donate $1 million a year by 2025.

"The focus of our growth will become not hitting vanity metrics that don't really matter so much for a privately owned business, but what do we get to give, to contribute, as we hit different levels of revenue and profitability," he says. "You always start by giving. You commit to giving to something that is so important to you that you cannot fail, and you grow into a person or an organization that can deliver on this giving promise."

In addition, InfoTrust is in the process of building a roadmap to partial employee ownership within the next couple of years. "We, as human beings, all want to have a purpose," Yastrebenetsky says. "I think some of the happiest people in the world are those who get to work not because they have to pay the bills but because they realize their purpose day in and day out. They do what they're passionate about."