

iQ MCP BY SARAS ANALYTICS

3 Steps to Turn BigQuery into Claude Chats

How modern commerce teams ask questions of their data
instead of waiting for reports

01 Connect iQ
MCP

02 Link
BigQuery

03 Load Business
Logic

A practical setup guide for data-driven commerce teams

The Gap Between Your Data and Your Answers

You have BigQuery. You have Claude. And yet your team still ping-pongs between analysts, Slack threads, and stale dashboards to answer basic questions.

SOUND FAMILIAR?
"What were our marketing spends in the last 30 days?" · "What's net sales by channel this month?" · "What's our CM2 vs last quarter?"

Connecting Claude directly to BigQuery gets you halfway there. But **halfway has a catch** without a semantic layer, Claude has to guess what your business terms mean.

Claude + Raw BigQuery: What Actually Happens

What You Ask	What Claude Has to Figure Out Alone
What is our gross revenue?	Which table? Which column? Tax-inclusive or not?
Show me CM1, CM2, CM3	No idea what CM1 means without your business logic doc
Revenue by channel last month	Shopify + Amazon + D2C? Timezone? Returns included?
Is this good or bad?	Makes its best guess sometimes confidently wrong

THE KEY INSIGHT
Claude + raw BigQuery gives you speed. Claude + iQ MCP gives you accuracy. The difference is business context – the definitions, hierarchies, and rules that live in your team's heads.

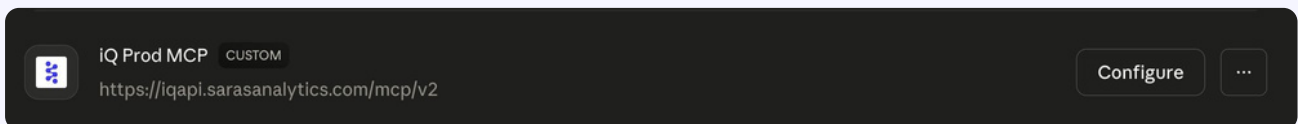
The 3-Step Setup

The exact workflow to go from a BigQuery warehouse to intelligent Claude conversations, with the business context your data actually needs.

STEP 01 Connect Claude to iQ MCP

1. Open **ClaudeDesktop** (Team or Enterprise plan required)
2. Go to Settings → Developer → Edit Config
3. Add the iQ MCP connector your admin must enable this for your org first
4. Authenticate with your iQ MCP credentials (demo or production)

Pro tip: If it fails on first attempt, close and reconnect. A known quirk that self-resolves.



iQ Prod MCP connector shown in Claude settings, click Configure to authenticate

STEP 02 Link iQ MCP to Your BigQuery Project

1. Ensure you have a **Google service account JSON key** for your BQ project
2. In Claude Desktop config, point the BQ connector to your **specific GCP project ID** (e.g., insights-prod)
3. Authenticate via gcloud CLI: run **gcloud auth application-default login**
4. Restart Claude Desktop fully – check system tray to confirm no lingering processes
5. Verify: ask Claude **"What are you connected to?"** and confirm BQ appears

STEP 03 Load Your Business Logic

1. Create a business logic document defining **key metrics, table mappings, and calculation rules**
2. Include: metric definitions (gross revenue, net revenue, CM1/CM2/CM3), table-to-KPI mappings, data hierarchy (channel → region → SKU), edge cases (returns, discounts, timezone)
3. Attach inside a **Claude Project** or reference it in your system prompt

Result: Claude uses iQ MCP to query data AND your definitions to interpret it **eliminating hallucination on domain-specific terms**

Complexities to Expect

The 3-step setup is straight forward for teams with the right access. But real-world integrations surface edgecases. Here is where things get complicated and where specialist involvement pays for itself.

ACCESS & PERMISSIONS

Admin-level setup required

iQ MCP must be enabled at the **organisation admin level** in Claude before any user can connect. Most teams hit a wall here – the connector is invisible until an admin activates it. On the BigQuery side, the service account needs the right IAM roles (BigQuery Data Viewer, BigQuery Job User) scoped to the correct project.

Specialist help needed when: You don't control your Google Cloud IAM, your org uses SSO/SAML, or your BQ project has VPC-SC (perimeter) restrictions.

BUSINESS LOGIC AUTHORIZING

The hardest 20% of the work

Writing effective business logic is not just documentation – it is **precision metric engineering**. Ambiguous definitions (e.g., "net sales" meaning different things in finance vs. ops) cause Claude to route queries to the wrong logic. Multi-channel businesses with Shopify + Amazon + D2C need separate definitions per channel with clear precedence rules.

Specialist help needed when: You have 3+ data sources, your KPI definitions vary by team, or your CM1/CM2/CM3 hierarchy involves more than 5 tables.

DATA QUALITY & SCHEMA

Garbage in, garbage out

iQ MCP queries your **existing BigQuery tables as-is**. If your ETL pipeline has gaps – missing joins, inconsistent date fields, unnormalised channel names – Claude will surface those inconsistencies as confusing answers. This is often the first time teams discover their data is less clean than assumed.

Specialist help needed when: Answers from Claude don't match your dashboards, or you see NULL-heavy results or mismatched totals across queries.

MULTI-USER ROLLOUT

Scaling beyond the pilot

A single-user demo is easy. Rolling this out to a marketing team of 12 means managing **shared Claude Projects, consistent business logic versions, and access controls** so different teams don't overwrite each other's context. Claude's Team plan has project sharing; Enterprise has proper governance. Choosing the wrong tier creates friction early.

Specialist help needed when: You don't control your Google Cloud IAM, your org uses SSO/SAML, or your BQ project has VPC-SC (perimeter) restrictions.

BOTTOM LINE

The setup is simple when your data is clean, your team is small, and someone owns cloud admin. Most commerce businesses are not there yet – and that is exactly where we come in.

What Changes for Your Team

Once all three steps are in place, here is the impact across your organisation.

BUSINESS USERS

No SQL Required

Ask in plain English. Get answers that respect your metric definitions, not generic SQL assumptions. Follow-up questions retain full context.

DATA TEAMS

Stop Fielding Ad-Hoc Requests

Business logic is codified once and reused across every chat. iQ MCP acts as a governed semantic layer. Claude does not go rogue on raw tables.

LEADERSHIP

Numbers You Can Trust

Answers match your actual business definitions. No more "the numbers look off" moments. From question to insight in seconds, not hours.

REAL EXAMPLE FROM TESTING

"What were my Shopify vs Amazon net sales last 30 days?" – iQ MCP routes to the right tables, applies your net sales definition (gross minus discounts, minus returns, excluding shipping), and returns **\$2.3M (Shopify)** and **\$400K (Amazon)**. Same underlying data, correct interpretation.

Speed vs. Accuracy: The Honest Trade-off

Intesting, Claude + iQ MCP adds a small amount of latency vs. Claude querying BigQuery directly. The round-trip through iQ MCP agents – business logic retrieval, question planning, SQL generation, summary takes a few extra seconds.

The trade-off is worth it when accuracy matters more than raw speed. For contribution margin, _____ channel profitability, or investor reporting, **you want the answer to be right, not just fast.**

The 4 iQ MCP Tools Claude Uses

When you ask a question through iQ MCP, Claude orchestrates four specialised tools. Understanding this helps you write better prompts.

Tool	What It Does	When It Fires
Ask Question	Routes your natural-language query to iQ MCP's data engine	<i>Every query</i>
Get Answer	Retrieves the structured result and formats it for Claude	<i>Every query</i>
Get Business Logic	Pulls your metric definitions and calculation rules	<i>Complex / ambiguous questions (e.g., CM2, gross margin)</i>
Get Table Context	Returns high-level schema info for relevant tables	<i>When Claude needs to understand data structure</i>

Prompting Tips for Better Answers

- Be explicit about the metric: **"net sales"** not just "revenue" – helps iQ MCP pull the right business logic
- Specify time ranges: **"last 30 days"** or **"Q1 2026"** rather than "recently"
- Name your channels: **"Shopify channel"** or **"Amazon marketplace"** to avoid ambiguity
- If both BQ and iQ MCP are connected, direct Claude explicitly: **"Use iQ MCP to answer this"** to avoid split routing
- For complex KPIs: **"Using our CM2 definition, what is contribution margin by channel this quarter?"**

Ready to set this up for your team?

The 3-step setup takes under 30minutes with the right access. Your entire commercial team marketing, sales, finance asking plain English questions and getting answers grounded in your actual business definitions. No SQL. No waiting. No guessing.

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