The Myth of Business Intelligence

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Director
Agenda

- Looking at the Past
- The Chasm
- Common Myths
- Filling the Void
Looking at the Past

- Sequential Processing
- ‘Flat’ Reports
- 6 Months to produce
- Slow to respond
- Out of date before implemented
Looking at the Past

- Personal Computing
- Very flexible
- Time Consuming
- Tedious
- Instant
Looking at the Past

Reporting Systems

Decision Support Systems
Looking at the Past

- Database Engines
- Classic Express / SAS etc.
- pcExpress v1.5 released in 1982
Looking at the Past
That was all pre-Windows
Looking at the Past

- Microsoft Windows
- IBM OS/2
Looking at the Past
Decision Support Systems
Executive Information Systems
Looking at the Past

What were the differences?

- Graphical User Interface – Let’s all imitate the Microsoft Interface
- Supposedly more “Intuitive”
Looking at the Past

Nothing much has changed since then!
Looking at the Past

“The query/report writers and spread-sheets have been extremely limited in the ways in which data (having already been retrieved from the DBMS) can be aggregated, summarized, consolidated, summed, viewed, and analyzed.”

E.F. Codd, S.B. Codd and C.T. Salley

Providing OLAP to User-Analysts
“Most notably lacking has been the ability to consolidate, view, and analyze data according to multiple dimensions... called ‘multidimensional data analysis’”

E.F. Codd, S.B. Codd and C.T. Salley

*Providing OLAP to User-Analysts*
Looking at the Past

Business Intelligence is the process of transforming data into information and through discovery transforming that information into knowledge.

Gartner Group
Looking at the Past

Business Intelligence is the process of transforming data into information and through **discovery** transforming that information into knowledge.

Gartner Group
Common Myths
Relational Databases are Great for Business Intelligence ...

- Optimized for fast transactional response times
- Designed to hold large amounts of detail level data
- Designed to handle a large number of users
- Un-natural data storage for end users

The Myth of Business Intelligence
Cubes R Us …

- Optimized for fast slice, dice and pivot
- Provides fully flexible end user functionality
- Natural “view” of the data in the eyes of end users
- Language allows ability to model complete cubes
Executives want to be able to rotate their reports ...

“I just want the system to make my job easier”

“Can’t this thing tell me what I want to know without me having to dig for it?”
Executives want to be able to build their own reports …

“What do I pay consultants and my IT department for?”

“I have technofobia, I really can’t handle this!”
Executives need to be able to drill to the lowest level of detail ...

“I don’t trust the people beneath me to do their job properly”

“I like having access to all the data that I was familiar with...”

“I’m a hands on kind of manager – I need the information”
The Business Rule Model

What are the business questions that need to be answered?

Can we build DB structures to hold the rules?

What is the sequence to the rules?

What parameters drive the rules and processes?
Change the way we build

- The Analysis phase must change to reflect the fact that we are going to build a system using the Business Rules Model.
- The Database Design will change to reflect the new model.
- The Menu navigation must change to reflect the new model.
Change the Analysis Phase

- Identify key users and groups.
- Walk through the Analysis process that each of the users and groups works through.
- Examine current reports, identify parameters that cause them to highlight particular figures.
Change the Analysis Phase

- Build the Business Rule Model.
- Conceptualize the models that will be needed to support the Business Rule Model.
- Determine the inter-relationship between the Rules.
Change the Database Design

- Build User-based structures that hold history and favorites etc.
- High level aggregate objects (Tables / Measures) that provide fast access to summary level data.
- Key measures based on high level enquiries by users.
Change the Database Design

- Question the “coolness” of designs with the “So What?” question.
- Design to make use of usage tracking information.
Change the Menu style

- Ditch traditional Menus.
- Menus should be structured along the Business Rules timeline.
- The interface should mould itself to the end-user.
Change the Menu style

- The Logic of the Interface should match the Business Process.
- The Links between the interface and the models should be seamless.
- Each user must be able to reset the parameters for any Business Rule Model.
Traditional Menus

- Standard Reports
- Forecasts
- Budget
- Growth
- Ranking

- Review
- Quota
- Exceptions
- Trend
- ...

The Myth of Business Intelligence
Traditional Menus

The Myth of Business Intelligence
Newspaper Style Menu

- Today’s Headlines
- Stories in detail
- Departmental Information
Example Menu

News in Short
- Increase in products that have failed to perform
- Key Performance problems
- Highlights

Today’s Top Stories
- Today’s Sales Figures
- Financial Position
- Budget Process
- Key Dates
- Information
Example Menu and Interface
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