

WHITE PAPER

REALLY AGILE BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

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A new page in collaborative business insights



Research in the performance of business intelligence tools finds that most deployments serve less than 15% of the enterprise population requiring insights to make better decisions. Surprising then that corporations on average employ more than 15 different BI tools. The high cost and complexity to change means that many Enterprise BI software suites focus on answering questions that are already well understood. Learning lessons from previous deployments suggest the future of business intelligence lies in nimble tools that extend collaborative workspaces with 'instant insight'.

Agile Business Intelligence

The frontal lobe of the human brain plays a more significant role in the processes of functional memory, creative thought, emotional behavior, planning and decision making not to mention language and motor control. But just because most of the brain activity happens in the frontal lobe, doesn't mean the rest of the brain can't contribute something to decision making! Training heavyweight business intelligence technologies on a small number of business critical areas can often leave the enterprise exposed to threats and risks that go unnoticed. The role of Agile BI is to apply business intelligence to new and emerging situations; to quickly identify areas of risk and isolate opportunities for competitive advantage.

Creating a broader span of business intelligence across the enterprise demands a very different kind of technology that can adapt to new insight requirements without frictional IT costs. There are a number of software products now entering the market that combine dexterity of data acquisition and views with the

robustness and security expected of enterprise software products. Agile Business Intelligence software applies agile development techniques to create new insights that respond to new situations. Agile development methods are known to deliver faster time-to-value for businesses and users.

IT market analysts Gartner Inc. in its report 'Greater Business Value' a collaborative effort by nine Gartner analysts specializing in BI, suggest that the next few years will see a significant move from traditional forms to more agile BI. Their report also describes the under-pinning drivers for this transformation:

1. **By 2012, business units -- not technology departments -- will be held responsible for more than 40 percent of the total budget for BI projects.** "While technology departments might be making decisions about what technology products to run, business units will be the ones deciding what to do with those tools once they're in the enterprise."
2. **Through 2012, more than 35 percent of the top 5,000 global companies will make uninformed decisions due to underinvestment in information infrastructure and business-user tools.** "The recession forces an enterprise to stay aware of dramatic changes in its business and to rethink strategic and operating plans."
3. **By 2010, 20 percent of organizations will have an industry-specific analytic application delivered through software-as-a-service (SaaS).** "As SaaS continues to permeate the enterprise, Gartner estimates it will increasingly appear within enterprise BI portfolios."

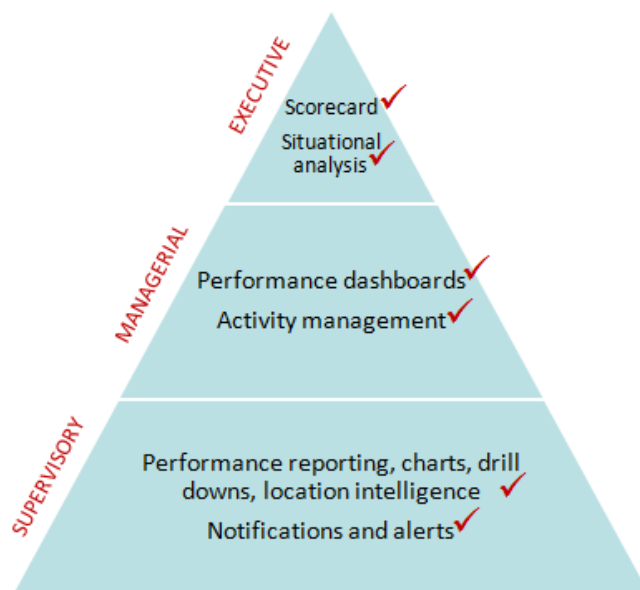
From Agile to Really Agile Business Intelligence

The term 'agile' in the IT industry has become synonymous with SCRUM software development. SCRUM is a development approach where multiple developers work closely together with stakeholders to iteratively develop solutions. But Encanvas enables business intelligence applications to be created by a single person, not a team because it negates the use of multiple development tools or coding skills.

Encanvas BusinessIntel is an example of a new form of rapid development environment for business intelligence; where line of business managers can work across-the-desk with business analysts to shape the new business insights they need without requiring back-office programming. Its uniquely collaborative BI technology serves the majority of decision makers at all levels of the organization. Embedded data mashup functionality makes it well suited to bringing together new views of insights and really agile development means it's best placed to help decision makers rationalize what they don't already know.

Encanvas is a Microsoft® ASP.NET based solution that can deploy new applications to the Microsoft® Azure cloud computing platform. It comes supplied with a series of templated solutions that drive performance improvement across the enterprise. Building around this core of performance management features is made easy through the use of agile development methods. Unlike traditional business intelligence solutions, dashboards and views created using Encanvas can be consumed throughout the enterprise because cost of development is so much lower. Once created, applications and information services can be re-used by user communities to serve new purposes.

Encanvas BusinessIntel serves insights requirements across the enterprise



The collaborative side of BI

The business environment is progressively collaborative. There is an expectation that organizations will share their insights with remote staff, project teams, suppliers and customers. Critical to the ability of organizations to do this is the security environment that exists around data and applications. Modern applications like Encanvas employ 'inclusive' security models so the strategy for security is based on protecting the data itself rather than the vessels where data is held. Such strategies recognize that it's no longer possible to protect the boundaries of an enterprise; boundaries that no longer exist.

The pace of collaboration has increased in the last few years as the result of the growing awareness of social networking and its applicability to the business world. Business social networking started as a means for office workers to engage in social chat but it has grown to become something much more robust and serious than its 'social' title suggests. Products like Google Wave and Encanvas Squork

provide an App Store for new applications that can be combined into collaborative environments formed by users and their groups. Business Social Operating Systems like Encanvas Squork enable users to share their ideas and insights. Rather than creating the lowest common denominator of views, each user can enjoy a personalized experience.

Encanvas Squork create secure spaces



Encanvas BusinessIntel produces new BI applications that can be consumed by user communities within the secure spaces created by Encanvas Squork giving organizations the ability to securely share insights across their organization and beyond without compromising data governance or security.

Forming the questions

Often in business, understanding the nature of a challenge or business issue can be as difficult to pin down as finding a solution. Particularly when cross organizational or cross-industry insights are needed, it is normally collaboration and communication that must come first. Social networking solutions introduce a platform where all contributors to a community of interest are equal. The organizational boundaries made resoundingly obvious by email messaging (i.e. ian.tomlin@encanvas.com) become more opaque in the social operating 'spaces' of Encanvas Squork. By creating spaces where everyone is equal, the willingness to share ideas and experiences mushrooms and provides a rich platform to shape perspectives of what business insights are required.

Information bridging (knowing what you know)

The presumption that business insights is about harvesting 'new data' is often misplaced. Information workers find it difficult to access knowledge they already have due to the limitations of technology and the constant presence of siloism. The combination of social operating systems, agile business intelligence and data mashing technology provide the necessary environment for information workers to re-use the knowledge they already have in new ways – although it is often the case

that enriching this knowledge with external sources of information brings even greater value.

In one case example, Encanvas was used to provide credentials intelligence for a global professional services organization that was struggling to evidence its past record of projects to clients who wanted more detailed evidence of value and competencies. The scant data held on customer records was mashed together with third party industry data, project data (from a project management system that held data on contributors and project scope) and a human resources database to create a single enquiry process able to find, interpret and publish credentials for inclusion in proposals.

Business intelligence across the enterprise

Business intelligence mashups that federate disparate data

Online access to business activity analytics from anywhere

Collaborative business intelligence integrated into the Social Office

Executive alerts and scorecard dashboards

Agile BI portals that change as fast as your business environment

Geo-spatial intelligence applications

Common BI features

Agile business intelligence offer a different blend of functionality compared to traditional operational BI solutions. They must offer point-and-click authoring of new applications, the ability to mashup data from disparate sources and create new data sources where required. But like any business intelligence environment, the expectation of users is to view rich, dynamic data visualizations, charts and maps that bring information to life in the smallest onscreen area.

Proactive, not reactive

Agile BI solutions are today expected to deliver alerts and notifications as situations change so that information workers can respond in advance of 'bad things happening' or opportunities being missed. For this reason, platforms like Encanvas BusinessIntel support close integration with email, SMS and web-chat.

How It Works

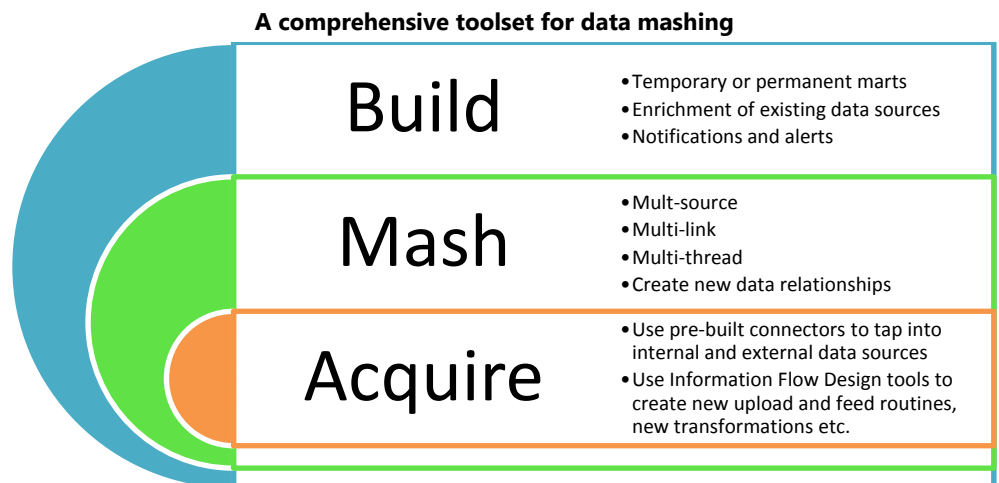
Agile BI embeds into collaborative environments like Encanvas Squork, Google Wave and Jive so people can have conversations and share their ideals, insights and apps at the same time. It's really easy to use so analysts can work with business stakeholders and instantly publish new mashup views that support project team activities and decision makers.



As projects progress it soon becomes apparent which applications must become operational and should sustain for months (perhaps years) to keep management teams on top of business activities. The scalability and robustness of Encanvas BusinessIntel allows applications to become embedded extensions of core business applications without creating a huge overhead on resources.

Data mashups

Data mashups are fundamental to the creation of federated insights. Platforms like Encanvas Secure&Live™ (that underpin Encanvas BusinessIntel) include very sophisticated data integration toolsets. Encanvas's AnySource™ technology provides an array of different mechanisms to acquire, consume, transform and integrate with existing data sources. It also includes functionality to create temporary or permanent data structures.



Benefits of Agile Business Intelligence

In summary, Agile Business Intelligence is seen to offer the following benefits:

Cut Costs

- Kill activities that do not contribute to targeted priorities

Determine financial risk and exposure

- Analyze premiums, claims, profitability and risk by customer, type of damage, product and country, giving underwriters the visibility to make better informed decisions faster.

Understand current cash flow

- Analyze inventory and accounts receivable data to decrease aging receivables and decrease inventory

Maintain profit margins

- Track rising operating costs such as transportation, commodities etc. and their impact on profit margins

Lower purchasing costs

- Reduce contract spend through greater visibility

Move goods faster

- (Retail) Reduce inventory by pinpointing slower selling items for faster markdowns and replenish inventory immediately in stores
- Lower inventory costs and optimize production by adapting to rapid changes in demand with more flexible production and order flows.

Making better decisions

- Make sense of information across the enterprise
- Plan activities and campaigns more effectively
- Interpret performance of partnerships

About Encanvas

Encanvas[®] software makes the workplace work better.

We bring value to the Microsoft[®] enterprise platform by creating the technologies organizations need to spend less and achieve more from software investments.

We've created the world's first Integrated Software Platform; digital equivalent of the micro-chip. Our Secure&Live[™] platform enables the design, deployment and operation of applications without coding or scripting all made possible by a single tightly coupled architecture. It facilitates the massive scaling of portal architectures; so users can communicate, share information and their applications in real-time while operating in 'secure spaces' that protect systems, data, identity and intellectual property.

Similar to the influence of the micro-chip in electronics, our integrated software platform is creating a mushroom of innovation around the world as individuals and organizations realize they now have the tools to design and publish right-first-time software applications to cloud computing platforms at very low cost and risk – serving the long-tail of business applications needs.

Encanvas also creates Social Operating Systems (see Encanvas Squork[™]). In the digital era a network is a group of people tied by relationships, not a set of computer systems strung together by wires. User-centric computing enables web workers to 'work efficiently anywhere' while organizations can achieve a step-change in productivity by harnessing the enthusiasm, skills and collective intelligence of social networks.

Intellectual property

All information of whatever kind and which is contained in any documentation, drawings, specifications, diagrams, plans, notes, data, patterns, models, samples, software, software applications, computer outputs or other materials or records or other information whether written or oral of a business, financial or technical nature which is marked or otherwise indicated or known to be of a confidential or proprietary nature shall be called for the purposes of this project 'Confidential Information' and remains the property of Encanvas Inc.

Encanvas Inc.'s appointed data controller is Mr Nick Lawrie. Further information is available on request.

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