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***How Smart Can Business Intelligence and Business Performance
Software Make a Company in the 21st Century?***

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The past 10 years have been quite remarkable in the enterprise software industry, and there's little doubt that we've come a long way.

In 1998, we were simply trying to prevent the deluge of internal data that engulfed the enterprise from drowning us; today, we're using sophisticated business intelligence and business performance software to figure out where a company has been – and, more importantly, where it's going.

To put it simply: we're finally leveraging the corporate IT infrastructure we've built over the past 10 years to create a forward-looking picture of where the enterprise is headed. And, you guessed it – much of the input is now coming from the customer.

***The Purpose Here Is Finding the Right Company Data and Getting it
Into The Right Hands at the Right Time So the Best Decisions Can
Be Made and the Right Customer Interactions Can Take Place***

This quest by both large and small enterprises is one of the prime reasons why business intelligence software – a \$5.7 billion market in 2005 – is expected to expand at 8.9 percent CAGR, to nearly \$9 billion by 2010.

More specifically, there are several factors that are driving the current surge of interest – both financial and technological – in business performance software today.

- One of the major opportunities lies in vertical market analytics that can be delivered on demand using a software-as-a-service (SaaS) model. With the IT department largely out of the loop, small- and medium-sized business will be the beneficiaries.
- Better, more collaborative and predictive decisions need to be made in a closed loop, and they need to come from every level in the company. The best applications will penetrate all levels of the enterprise and will be defined by ease of use and automation.
- In a world of increasing compliance, technology transparency is essential; companies need to know where their data come from. There is a renewed corporate emphasis on having a central repository of reliable and high-quality data.
- Significant input is also coming from the consumer technology sector, which is increasingly influencing the direction of strategic initiatives for enterprise hardware and software. This trend will only intensify in the coming year.
- Vertically oriented business performance applications will attract interest because companies want to see their data in a familiar format that is easy to use; the corporate BI geek is becoming a dinosaur.
- The lower-cost SaaS model improves the economics of business intelligence software; this enhanced return and enriched value is important to companies in a slower growth environment.

***There Is Always Avid Interest and Available Capital
For Solutions Like Business Intelligence Software
That Help Companies Make the Right Decisions***

Looking ahead, we see a continuation of M & A activity in the business intelligence marketplace. IBM, SAP and Oracle have all recently made significant acquisitions in this space, and there is no reason to believe that the trend won't extend itself.

If business intelligence and business performance software lives up to its potential and helps us make the right decisions at the right time, it could play

a role in helping companies escape any undertow that may result from a slowing economy in the next year.

In the end, there is always avid interest and available capital when technology actually makes our companies – and us – smarter.
