

## Editor's Letter

### Performance Management Turnaround

As we all hear that we are in the early stages of coming out of the worst recession since the 2nd World War, we all know that it will be more critical to keep a close control of and an operational handle on all aspects of costs, whilst ensuring we are as competitive in our sales & marketing functions, to ensure that when there are new business opportunities, that we can respond and act quickly. It is well recognised that Business Intelligence applications can assist with both the front office, the Sales & Marketing aspects of business growth, as well as the Back Office aspects of cost control.

During these recessionary times, the opportunity to streamline and "get fit" - in terms of operational processes - will ensure that the strong companies coming through these hard times will be the effective growth companies, during the next wave of economic upturn. By revisiting the existing investments that a business has made into people, processes, and software technology aligned with Business Intelligence is a great way of "base lining" your current status, and ensuring that you are optimising the capital and operational investments you've made to date.

### BI booms as firms strive for more accurate data ...

#### "Increase business value through driving data into information"

BI has come into its own during the recession, as the technology can help inform critical business decisions with more accurate data. In tough times, the first steps are to increase transparency which helps identify cost-centres, manage revenue expenditure, control capital investments, and then to more tightly align strategy with execution. This is why demand for BI, analytics and performance management is a relatively strong aspect of Executive control in these challenging times.

We hear from all sources, be they journalists, financial analysts or industry experts telling us that we are in the generation of data explosion and exploitation. Executives are now more savvy about the need for better information access and connectivity, to allow more real time information decisions based on integrated and high integrity data. There are two continuous challenges; joining up the Executive view of the need for better information access, and the ability for IT (technology, personnel & processes) to deliver against these needs in an affordable and de-risked manner.

In a recessionary market - like the one we are now in - there is the continuous business debate of Capital Investment versus Cost, Business Risk & Value (aka ROI). With over 7 years of delivering high value and successful Data Warehousing & Business Intelligence projects, **visualmetrics** has built two components which significantly help in mitigating risk, and ensuring that there is a high yield on any considered capital investment; **visualintegrator** and **visualvalue**.

**visualintegrator** is a pre-developed generic Data Warehouse, that allows minor customisation to fit with functional and technical project needs, thereby reducing time and development effort, and mitigating project risk. This is all based on best practice and open software standards. The historical 6 - 18 month Data Warehouse project is a thing of the past. Productionised delivered applications within less than 90 days are a reality, allowing expansibility in both business and technical scope.

**visualvalue** is the **visualmetrics** ROI template that enables a client to audit and evaluate the value of a project of this nature; ensuring that investment will allow for a significant return/yield, sweating the data and capital assets of the business to make you perform better in the current economy, making sure you're competitive when the economic markets change.

If you would like to assess the applicability of these products and services to assist your project, then contact **enquiries@visualmetrics.co.uk**



## Sportsmans Lunch

**visualmetrics** sponsored a Sportsmans lunch this summer at Chester race course, a fabulous venue for such a great event. With speakers from Snooker (Steve Davis), Rugby Union (Nigel Redman) and Football (Jan Molby), we were blessed with great sporting achievers who were also enjoyable company and great orators. We were pleased to welcome a selection of customers and business partners, along with Nicola's Fund parents. In conjunction with MBN Promotions, we were able to raise additional contributions to Nicola's Fund through a series of auction prizes.



## Charity Walk

In April of this year Harry (Coan) undertook an arduous 16 day trek through the Annapurna mountains of Nepal. The expedition is raising money to assist in the purchase and construction of a library in a remotely located school in the Annapurna district.

Equally, and sadly, family friends who lost their only child, Nicola, to a rare and aggressive form of cancer, have formed a charity for low income families who have children with terminal cancer conditions; Nicola's Fund. The charity has been running for over three years, and provides valuable support for families in highly financially and emotionally compromised situations. So far Harry has raised in excess of £2,000, and Harry's walk has helped several families already, and those who have pledged we'd

like to thank for your valuable time and boundless generosity. Those who have not yet made a donation and would like to do so you can find Harry's Just Giving page at: <http://www.justgiving.com/harrycoan>. There are some excellent photographs of the trek and it helps pinpoint the quality of life we have, even in these hard times, compared to those born in less fortunate circumstances.

## visualmetrics Welcome Notices

**We all know that times are hard and as they say in The North, "e're all drawing our horns in", but visualmetrics has always been focused on customer quality, investment and growth. To this end, we are pleased to introduce you to two new members of staff.**

**Wayne Hover**, who has worked within the IT industry for more than 25 years, and has worked in the Business Intelligence & Data Warehousing market for more than 15 years. Vastly experienced with both business and technical skills, he will add significant value to the overall **visualmetrics** operation, and assist clients in making the most of their project investments. A keen golfer with a handicap of 19, married with two grown up daughters, and a golden retriever called Henry, his only Achilles heel is he's a ManU fan... maybe that'll stimulate some response!!!



**Mike Hobson**, has joined the PROFESSIONAL Services function, and his easy going demeanour and ability to articulate complex technical ideas simply and concisely have made him an integral part of the consulting function. His deep technical knowledge of SAP BusinessObjects, SQL & Oracle have all been utilised to the fullest extent, and he's also established himself as the **visualmetrics** "training guru", delivering courses across the UK, Europe & USA. In his spare time, Mike works for the Nottinghamshire Metropolitan Police Force as a Special Constable. He also runs a Scout Group and he's an all-round good egg and generous contributor to the community. Recently married, Mike has just come back from the trip of a life time to New Zealand on honeymoon.

# New Projects and Clients

## BT iNET

"BT iNet have recently agreed contractual terms with **visualmetrics** to design, develop and deploy through resource collaboration, a suite of KPIs to allow greater business insight into operational aspects, objectively focusing on further enhancing BT iNETs leadership position in the delivery of quality VoIP solutions"



## Places for People

"PFP have commissioned **visualmetrics** to design, develop and deploy a new KPI-based application allowing PFP to have greater financial and operational insight into the strategic area of Repairs. This is to ensure that they are providing the highest quality of social care for their tenants, whilst being mindful of Regulatory Compliance and having greater control of operational resources of staff, assets and finances."



antivia

## Antivia partnership announcement

Antivia is an innovative Business Intelligence software solutions company represented worldwide and founded in 2007 by a team who have amassed considerable experience in the Business Intelligence industry. Antivia's suite of solutions is born out of this experience. Our enterprise-class solution framework is focused on delivering incremental value to our customers by enabling them to take advantage of new opportunities through more effective use of their existing Business Intelligence platform. From real-time dashboards, to hierarchy management, to end user collaboration and social networking, Antivia's vision is shaped by the desire to see Business Intelligence content and capability delivered to a community of collaborative users in ever more useful, intuitive and effective ways.

**visualmetrics** MD, Chris Coan says, "We are delighted to form this strategic relationship with Antivia, who have a significant heritage in Business Intelligence and Reporting products, and their recent awards with SAP BusinessObjects acknowledges them as technology thought leaders in advanced Business Intelligence tools". This collaboration will allow **visualmetrics** to further enhance and extend the value that we can bring to our clients Business Intelligence projects with complimentary software products.

More information about Antivia can be found at [www.antivia.com](http://www.antivia.com).

Alternatively view <http://www.visualmetrics.co.uk/antivia> and visit the online webinar for a product overview.

## IBM Cognos Express – The midsize business solution

Many have lamented that the 'buy in price' to begin developing a Business Intelligence footprint at the lower and mid market levels has often precluded those who have most to gain, particularly in a recessionary market when budgets are strained. Recognising and rising to this challenge, IBM Cognos Express has been developed specifically for midsize companies to enable them to make their first investment into, and generate tangible returns from, a Business Intelligence solution without the initial capital outlay.

Cognos Express delivers all the essential reporting, analysis, dashboard, scorecard, planning, budgeting and forecasting capabilities of the Cognos 8 platform. Prepackaged with the TM1 OLAP engine, and a broad selection of reporting tools, Cognos Express is an 'all-in-one' scalable solution that delivers the midsize organisation the same insight and tactical agility as the Blue-Chip goliaths, but at a scaled down price.



## SAP BusinessObjects Explorer – 'Google-izing' Business Intelligence

May 2009 saw the launch of SAP BusinessObjects latest search tool, Explorer, which enables business users with no training or knowledge of application and data structures to perform key word searches to retrieve precise reports, graphs and data. Billed as 'information at the speed of thought', Explorer offers business users a more intuitive way to navigate the breath of information of the solution without having to learn to operate a traditional portal. Key benefits include:

### Data field and Metadata Search –

Instant exploration using business keywords.

### Intuitive exploration of data and charts –

Complements results with contextually relevant details.

### Automated relevancy and chart generation –

Most relevant information first. Automatically generates the chart that best represents the information.



**EXPLORE YOUR BUSINESS  
AT THE SPEED OF THOUGHT**

# visualassurance service product update

“Over the past 12 months **visualmetrics** has endeavoured to provide the highest quality of support for both technical software requirements and the key business processes which they support. Fast and efficient reactive solutions to technical issues that have been encountered, timely communication and implementation of component product upgrades and bug-fixes, and regular technical updates have been our continuous goal.

During this period, **visualmetrics** has also enhanced the **visualassurance** solution portfolio, developed to deliver a wealth of value-add services that can enhance the business benefit a company's BI solution delivers. The business demands of BI applications used today, have varied from what they delivered 12 months ago, and these changes affect both the operational business and IT support aspects of the BI application.

The new and extended **visualassurance** solution portfolio has been designed to deliver both reactive and proactive support of both BI products and associated developed applications; new and improved services assist clients in understanding the benefits **visualassurance** has delivered, and how it differs from a mere reactive “break-fix” contract. This **visualassurance** solution portfolio also includes an on-line CRM portal for problem logging, FAQ area, and Knowledgebase. Please visit <http://www.visualmetrics.co.uk/visualassurance> which outlines the extended services available.

We continually re-evaluate our support services to ensure we not only deliver the best possible service, but that we excel in doing so. Planned improvements over the next twelve months will further increase the value our customers derive from our support service, and strengthen our position as one of the leading providers in our field. If you would like to discuss the exact formulation of your **visualassurance** contract, the Gold, Silver & Bronze packages, or the addition of other value-add services; please contact the Support Desk or your **visualmetrics** Account Manager who will be happy to help.



## Our Business Partners

To achieve the business objectives of being a premier organisation in the delivery of Analytical Applications, which derive business value for its clients, **visualmetrics** recognises the need to have a range of business partners who fall into three distinct categories:

**PRODUCT PARTNERS** who develop industry leading BI tools & BI suites. These are core components of the applications which **visualmetrics** already has, or will develop for custom specific reasons.



**APPLICATION PARTNERS** who have market leading operational applications, in chosen business sectors & operational areas. Their clients have requirements for information analysis, which is satisfied by the applications and consulting services of **visualmetrics**.



**SERVICE PARTNERS** who are recognised industry experts in management consulting, and technical consulting areas.



**NEWSLETTER** If you do not wish to receive future issues of the Newsletter, or you know of someone who would also benefit from receiving it, please email your request to: [newsletter@visualmetrics.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@visualmetrics.co.uk). If you have any other comments relating to the Newsletter, please address them to the Editor at [newsletter@visualmetrics.co.uk](mailto:newsletter@visualmetrics.co.uk).



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