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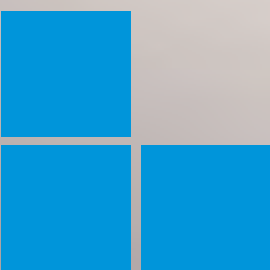
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Building a Business Intelligence Project team

Benedict de Borja
Product Manager- Pentaho

For most modern companies data has been recognized as the defining currency of the Information Age. But the question remains as to how a company's data can be used to reach the potential value that it can add to that company.

The rising trend in the adoption of a Business Intelligence platform to leverage on the data that a company already has on hand holds the key to unlocking the unrealized value of that data. The company simply needs to identify the data that will be used for this initiative, consolidate and transform it using a Business Intelligence platform and its Extract-Transform-Load (ETL) tools and build new ways of viewing and visualizing their data. This results in the company undertaking a Business Intelligence initiative to achieve this unrealized value.

But when a company finally decides to put a Business Intelligence initiative in place, the company needs to identify who would be needed to fill in the roles and responsibilities to make that initiative a success. Indeed

undertaking a Business Intelligence Project takes a bit of orchestration and coordination between several parties. The scope, scale and coverage of a company's BI project will vary from company to company as each will consume the outputs of the analytical capabilities of their chosen BI platform for different purposes.

No matter the size and complexity of a company's BI initiatives, building the team to get a company's BI objectives on track can start off on a few simple premises. First they would have to identify who will be the parties that will create, store, and prepare the data that will be consumed by the business intelligence platform and who will be the parties that will accept, integrate, and transform the data for it to be analyzed and presented in such a way that will give new insight for the end users or consumers of the now transformed data so that it can deliver the once unseen value that it inherently had within it.

This now creates two general categories from which you can begin to build your BI Project team. These categories are namely the Data Management Team and the Business Intelligence Team.

The Data Management Team is in charge of the data that will be used by the Business Intelligence platform in order to produce the analytical reports and visual representations that will be the key value of undertaking a BI initiative in a company.

The Data Management Team helps to find out which users or groups of users produce which data, takes care of the storage, retrieval, and integrity of the data. They may also be involved in the architecture of the transmission of the data from the different sources and devices going towards the data warehouse and finally into the Business Intelligence platform. The Data Management Team can be composed of the following members.

Data Management Team

- Data Analyst
- Data Engineer
- Data Steward
- Database Administrator
- Network Administrator

The Business Intelligence Team is responsible for data definitions, identification of data sources and connectivity, consolidation and working with end users to define



business requirements and needs, performing data validation, consolidation and integration of data from different sources, creation of analytical models, graphical / visual data representations and overseeing the implementation and delivery of BI requirements and assuring that the promised benefits of BI projects are achieved. The Business Intelligence Team can be composed of the following members:

Business Intelligence Team

- Data Scientist
- Domain Expert
- Business Analyst
- Data Integration (ETL) Developer Expert
- Analytics Expert
- Application Developer
- Dashboard Developer
- Statistical Modeler

Depending on the size and resources that the company has the members of both teams can either be sourced in house or be part of the deployment team of the BI Vendor. The company may also assign consultants to the BI Project to assure that guiding principles are met pertaining to organizational policies related to data procurement, analysis and reporting. But in any case the Data Management Team will work with Business Intelligence Team members to build and deliver the company's BI requirements.

The mix of people on your team should be a good balance between domain expertise, process and data analytical skills, technical skills and so on. You must also identify the goals of your BI project to both the end users and project team members in order to realize targeted business values and not just IT goals

As each BI requirement is delivered new ones will appear and may necessitate the growth of your BI team new domains may be included in the scope thereby requiring new domain specialists or SMEs or additional other similar resources. New data sources or data sets may be needed to be part of the data warehouse thus requiring more data administrators to handle the workload. But in summary good data governance by the data management team coupled with effective and efficient transformation and analytical output by the business intelligence team both working together with positive synergy will increase the odds of achieving the potential value of your company's data.


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When Is It Time to Consider Cloud Financial Management?

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In our previous issue, we have discussed the reasons why companies leave Quickbooks and opt for Cloud Financials. We will be wrap things up by telling you why Cloud Financial Management is the best option for your business.

When Is It Time to Consider Cloud Financial Management?

Here are a few signs that indicate that a business is ready to switch from QuickBooks to a cloudbased, on-demand service like NetSuite:

- System upgrades and improvements are pushed to the back burner, due to the associated cost and disruption. All too often, companies realise that their current business systems fall short of what the organisation desperately needs to accelerate growth, but no one can face the thought of the disruption and expense of upgrading to the latest versions or adding more people. The business may also be falling behind on giving employees and customers the ability to access information

over the web and from mobile devices because there aren't adequate internal resources to implement and manage the required technology.

- Backups, server failures, malware, and data security are constant worries. It is a major business risk when financial data is concentrated in a single QuickBooks system, while ancillary information is scattered around in other software systems and spreadsheets. Business continuity would be disrupted if one of the machines suffered a serious failure or there were a fire or natural disaster. The company is overly reliant on fallible backup routines. Other major concerns are malware attacks and data theft. A sobering question is how quickly the business could recover if a server went down and the company had to revert to a backup.
- A major deterrent to investing in new technology is the time required to see a return on investment. Funding new applications or technology upgrades requires significant working

capital, but it can be many months before the organisation sees a return. Even then, there is no guarantee that the new technology will deliver the expected results. When this is the situation, it often feels safer to just muddle along with existing systems and processes, even if everyone recognises that they are holding the organisation back.

Best Practices For Transitioning Away From QuickBooks

As small businesses grow, it is clear that alternatives to QuickBooks are needed but the path forward isn't always well-defined. Here are several best practices that can smooth the path to a better solution:

- Adopt a cloud-based solution. Cloud momentum is accelerating and the cloud is becoming ubiquitous in the consumer and business worlds. The cloud represents a tremendous opportunity because it enables business leaders to deliver outcomes faster, cheaper, and with fewer resources. Cloud solutions are now the de facto standard for doing business:



– Gartner reports that the cloud is the number one technology affecting IT.

– Forrester has found that over 50% of companies plan to increase their cloud spending over the next 12 months.

– In 2013, the Cloud Accounting Institute conducted a national survey of financial and accounting professionals. It revealed that three quarters of respondents currently use cloud solutions, technologies, or software-as-a-service, and 82% intend to use cloud or software-as-a-service for accounting solutions in the future.

– A study by the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) found that the most critical challenges faced by accounting and finance teams today are integrating disparate business systems, adding business intelligence software, and replacing siloed business systems with a single business suite and data base.

Growing companies typically have limited IT resources. Cloud solutions eliminate the need to maintain on-premises hardware and software. Cloud systems also enable mobility, since workers can access the application from any

computer or device with Internet access and a web browser. Cloud solutions are also highly scalable, enabling growing companies to accelerate growth without needing to invest capital in technology or add people.

- Consider a suite. Rather than perpetuating the “applications hairball” when replacing QuickBooks, many companies decide to adopt an integrated product suite. A suite platform eliminates the need to piece together different solutions. An integrated suite makes managing data much easier. Dual data entry is eliminated, since all information is stored in a single, centralised data repository. A suite solution enables companies to start with the basics and add complexity over time.
- Take time to understand the business needs and key business requirements. Before selecting a solution to replace QuickBooks, be sure the organisation understands its business and key business processes. Growing companies often believe they are saving money by not spending the time needed to understand and capture the business requirements. Unfortunately, this can lead to building the wrong solution.

- Hire a partner to help with data migration. Regardless of what platform a company adopts, it can be helpful to find a suitable partner who can help migrate data and perform checks and balances before the system goes live. This approach will ensure that the transition to a new system is consistent with business processes and objectives.

Case Studies

Four growing businesses in different geographies and industries—TandemSeven, AidaPak Services, DC Dental, and Imagine Learning—shared case studies, summarised below, discussing why their organisations transitioned away from QuickBooks, why they selected NetSuite, and how NetSuite has helped improve their effectiveness and efficiency.

Conclusion

If your growing enterprise is experiencing any of the pains discussed where QuickBooks may be limiting your business growth, it may be time to consider the cloud-based products and services that NetSuite offers. Moving your company to NetSuite’s integrated suite of cloud-based solutions allows for more efficient and effective business operations—essential for growing an organisation and enabling employees to react to client and organisational needs in real time.

ServiceDesk Plus Ensures Technician Accountability and Happy End Users

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About

Lesedi Nuclear Services is a leading EPC (Engineering, Procurement, and Construction) company based in the Western Cape, South Africa. It provides engineering, recurrent maintenance services, and technical resources to the country's power industry.

The Challenge

The IT help desk team at Lesedi consists of four technicians, and it provides end-user support for desktop, printer fleet management, IT and non-IT applications, networks, servers, and WAN (wide area network). The overwhelming user-to-technician ratio posed numerous challenges for the IT help desk team. With almost 220 end users to support, the 4 technicians had their inboxes flooded with ticket logs every day, besides the support requested via their telephone lines. With no clear distinction between high-priority and low-priority tickets, critical tickets were left unattended and sometimes even unnoticed.

In addition, lack of clarity on who should handle particular tickets led

to unattended tickets, confusion, and an inefficient IT help desk. This, without a doubt, compromised the quality of the company's IT service delivery. When Darren Hammond, the ICT (information & communication technology) manager, joined Lesedi, he was able to observe the challenges that the IT help desk team faced. Consequently, Darren and his team began looking for a robust help desk solution that could assist

the technicians to effectively log, track, and resolve all IT tickets raised by the end users. This meant that end users could also move away from logging tickets via email. The team began evaluating various help desk solutions on the market. "After evaluating other help desk offerings like SysAid, Kayako, IFS, and Sharepoint, we settled for ServiceDesk Plus as it was easy to set up and work with," says Darren.





The Solution

With the ServiceDesk Plus implementation, Lesedi now enjoys a structured IT help desk system. The technicians no longer handle direct tickets but only those tickets raised through the ServiceDesk Plus application. When a ticket is raised, it's immediately picked and assigned to the right technicians. Service level agreements (SLAs), which define ticket response and resolution times, are used to manage the tickets. The knowledge base has also been set up and is growing steadily. This enables end users to solve issues without raising tickets or taking a technician's help. The dashboards help monitor each ticket. There are no more tickets lying unattended or unnoticed.

Darren now finds it easy to track, manage, and measure the performance of his team with more actionable, real-time data that helps him make better decisions.

ServiceDesk Plus is an excellent product. We simply love the dashboard as it allows us to keep

a watch on the tickets and quickly provides useful information.

"The technician auto-assign (round robin/load balancing) feature works best for our organization, reducing assignment delays," confirms Darren. The announcements, reply templates, and automated notification features in ServiceDesk Plus enable the help desk team to effectively communicate with the end users. Talking about the enhanced end-user experience, Darren says, "They (end users) now have visibility on the progress of their tickets and understand when they can expect their tickets to be resolved. With better ticket workflows and easy automations like business rules and technician auto-assign, we are now able to rapidly resolve issues and see improved end-user satisfaction."

Bottom Line

Talking about his overall experience with ServiceDesk Plus, Darren confidently declares, "ServiceDesk Plus is an excellent product. We simply love the dashboard as it allows us to keep a watch on the tickets and quickly provides useful information. The reports and surveys are easy to use and allow us to drill down into the details. The ticket workflows and automations help us reduce complexity and resolve issues faster. In the beginning it was a challenge, but now we can proudly say that we have improved our service delivery and as a result, we have happy end-users."

Iungo Corporation bags Red Herring Asia's Top 100 Award



Manila, Philippines - Iungo Corporation, a subsidiary company of IT Group Inc.(ITG) was recently included as a winner in Red Herring Asia's 2015 Top 100. The awarding ceremonies were held at the Dusit Thani Hotel last September 16, 2015, at the culmination of the three-day event.

The Red Herring Asia Top 100 award highlights the most exciting startups in Asia. Hundreds of companies from the region participated and were reviewed in a rigorous 3-step process that looks at all aspects of the company.

IUNGO in Latin, translates to "I Connect." The company's main product is a multi-dimensional energy controller and automation system for monitoring with the purpose to reduce the consumption of energy. This allows users to control their energy systems and appliances remotely using an internet connection.

Iungo aims to establish, globally as a reliable and indispensable platform in homes and buildings, making energy more cost-effective by eliminating waste and by automating many repetitive household functions.



Cris Gamboa, Chairman of Iungo Corporation with Iungo CEO Michael Burton.

ITG Wins the Netsuite 2 Star Award in Hong Kong



IT Group Inc. (ITG) bagged the Netsuite 2 Star Award 2015 last August 13 at the Netsuite Asia Partner Award 2015, an awarding event held during the 2-day Suite Engage event held at the Sheraton Hong Kong. The award affirmed ITG's position as one of the premier partners of Netsuite in the region.

The two-day event brought together Netsuite key partners and Netsuite Asia senior management, allowing them to share insights, ideas, and best practices on sales, pre-sales, marketing, implementation and training. The event also recognizes outstanding partners and their achievements.

"ITG is honored to be recognized as one of the best business partners of Netsuite in Asia. This is a testament to the excellent service and value that we are providing our clients in delivering Netsuite products." says ITG President and Chief Executive Officer, Cris Gamboa. "This award further motivates us to continue pushing the envelope when it comes to our service and product delivery, and stay true too our corporate mantra which is to fearlessly venture ahead."

ITG is one of the key partners of Netsuite in the SouthEast Asia region. ITG has earned its status as a preferred partner by providing superlative implementation and support for Netsuite products.

Netsuite is the number one Software as a Service Business Management Suite preferred by over 24,000 organizations across 100+ countries around the world. It removes the factor of distance in businesses by providing a complete cloud-based solution in managing your enterprise.

About IT Group



IT Group, Inc. (ITG) has been established since 2003. As an enabler and partner of businesses in technology service innovation, we are focused on solving the challenges faced by growing businesses through the synthesis of information, insight, talent and technology.

With years of experience, ITG has developed and managed projects ranging from enterprise application implementation and deployment, development or building of mission-critical applications.

We can provide businesses with capabilities and advisory to help you on them on a regular or occasional needs -- an expert who can get big problems solved immediately, and who can help you make important technical decisions and choices.

We have a good knowledge of what is actually happening in the industry -- which technologies, platform, practices and products are being used successfully, so that you aren't sorting through vendor claims on your own.

We pride ourselves not merely on our technical proficiency, but on the integrity and ability to understand and communicate. We provide the best options and solutions to clearly communicate these technology options to our client, so as to enable them to make the best use of their resources.

Our Core Business

CONSULTING & SYSTEM INTEGRATION

- IT Infrastructure
- Service & Network Planning
- Enterprise Architecture
- Information System (IS) Operational Analysis
- Business Process Re-engineering
- Technical Systems & Network Design
- Maintenance Planning

SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT

- Web Design & Development
- Intranet/Extranet Portal
- Custom Application Development

ENTERPRISE APPLICATION DEPLOYMENT & IMPLEMENTATION

- IT Service Management
- Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
- Business Intelligence (BI)
- Database Management / PostgreSQL
- Red Hat Enterprise Linux
- JBOSS

ENTERPRISE CONTENT MANAGEMENT

- Web Design & Development
- Document Management System

MANAGED SERVICE & OUTSOURCING

- Server & Desktop Management
- Web Maintenance
- Search Engine Optimization
- Social Media Strategy Development
- Staff Augmentation | IT Outsourcing

TRAINING & CERTIFICATION

- Red Hat Enterprise Linux
- PostgreSQL
- Pentaho Business Intelligence Bootcamp
- JBOSS
- JAVA Application Development (Entry-level & Advanced)

Supported Technology Framework



Strategic Business Partners



Contact us

Contact Numbers

+63 (02) 437 3583 | +632 439 5745

+63(02) 570 5175 | +632 571 2819

Address:

2/F Topy Main Bldg. Alcos Global IT Park

#3 Economia corner Calle Industria, Bagumbayan, Quezon City PH

Email Contacts:

For general inquiries, please send your emails to info.ph@itgroupinc.asia

For sales inquiries, please send your emails to sales.ph@itgroupinc.asia

For support inquiries, please send your emails to support@itgroupinc.asia

www.itgroupinc.asia