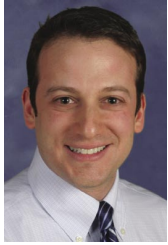


TECH CHOICES



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Business Objects: A Leader In Enterprise ETL, With A Strong Focus On Information Management

The Forrester Wave™ Vendor Summary, Q2 2007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Business Objects' Data Integrator is a relatively affordable enterprise-class ETL solution that incorporates comprehensive information management capabilities — further enhanced by its acquisition of data quality management vendor Firstlogic. Data Integrator adoption is still heavily weighted toward data warehousing (DW) and business intelligence (BI) initiatives to complement Business Objects BI solutions but has not been able to prove through referential customer case studies that Data Integrator can be successful in supporting operational data integration solutions.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Information and knowledge management professional

BUSINESS OBJECTS IS WELL SUITED FOR DW AND BI INITIATIVES

Business Objects is a leading BI analytics and reporting vendor. As such, the company maintains a large and loyal installed base for these solutions but is looking to leverage its enterprise-class ETL solution, Data Integrator, together with its top-tier data quality technology acquired from Firstlogic.¹ When combined with Business Objects' more mature business intelligence and enterprise performance management offerings, a compelling single-vendor information management capability arises. As Business Objects continues to improve the integration across these tools, its value proposition to customers will continue to increase, as well.

Forrester evaluated Business Objects' current offering and strategy for Enterprise ETL against 68 criteria (see Figure 1). Overall, the product has broad integration connectivity options with user-friendly design, development, and admin environments. However, according to referential customer case studies, Business Objects has not been able to prove that Data Integrator can be as successful for operational integration needs such as application migrations and M&A data consolidation. This means that the product is an especially good fit for buyers that:

- **Use Business Objects as an enterprise standard for BI.** If you have already adopted, or are considering adopting, Business Objects as your primary enterprise BI tool, then you can realize additional interoperability benefits by adopting Data Integrator as the data integration foundation for your BI environment. A key differentiator includes Business Objects' Rapid Marts. Based on technology acquired from Acta Technology, Rapid Marts are preconfigured data models and

data flows that allow users to quickly extract data from enterprise applications (including JD Edwards, Oracle, PeopleSoft, salesforce.com, SAP, and Siebel).² Rapid Marts allow Business Objects users to more quickly deliver a data warehouse or data mart based on an enterprise application. Business Objects currently offers 33 distinct Rapid Marts including accounts receivable, accounts payable, sales, purchasing, and inventory.

- **Focus primarily on batch data warehousing for data integration needs.** Data Integrator is a scalable and heterogeneous ETL product that can support the nightly batch-loading requirements of an enterprise data warehouse, but it has not proven itself in the marketplace as useful for near-real-time operational requirements.

To see how Business Objects stacks up against 10 other competitors, see the Forrester Wave evaluation of the enterprise ETL market.³

Figure 1 Business Objects Data Integrator Evaluation Overview

CURRENT OFFERING	
Server capability	Data Integrator includes support for parallelism and grid computing for high performance, and it uses an intelligent load distribution across a server cluster — among other techniques — to ensure high availability. Embedded role-based security configuration is available down to the object level, and a number of popular OS platforms are supported.
Integration options	Data Integrator (DI) offers excellent extract and load connectivity, including native database access to all major databases, mainframe access, multiple flat file formats, and packaged apps integration. DI's open service architecture can also publish Web services through a number of service-based technologies. Within DI, all data flows and workflows are reusable objects, but there is currently no additional sharing or reuse of objects across Data Integrator and Data Federator because they are using different metadata repositories.
Tool environments	ETL development for Data Integrator (DI) is performed in a single UI that allows the user to develop and manage projects, real-time/batch jobs, workflows, and data flows, and leverages a drag-and-drop graphical interface, wizards, and a library of predefined transformations. DI supports team-based development on multiple projects with access to metadata objects that are version controlled for check-in and checkout onto a local repository from the central repository.
Support and training	Business Objects offers world-class support in various formats and languages, as well as training through internal resources and via partners. User documentation is offered in English and Japanese, and Data Integrator's UI has been localized to English, Japanese, and simplified Chinese.
Additional data integration techniques	Data Federator (DF) is Business Objects' enterprise information integration offering and uses a codeless, menu-driven visual design UI for developers to define rules and map sources to a target. DF offers a mapping rule language but a more advanced scripting language as seen in Data Integrator is not yet available within DF. Business Objects supports change data capture capabilities for many natively supported databases and mainframes.
Information management	Data Integrator (DI) offers more than 100 predefined transformations and comes with a powerful visual editor and wizard for building lookups. DI's data profiling includes the ability to preview and profile data in source, target, and transformation objects and is augmented by Business Objects' Data Insight product for more advanced profiling. With the Firstlogic acquisition, Business Objects acquired one of the leading data quality software products and offers advanced data quality management as a separate but well-integrated offering. "Report to source" data lineage and "source to BI report" impact analysis is also supported within Business Objects' suite of products.

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

Figure 1 Business Objects Data Integrator Evaluation Overview (Cont.)

STRATEGY

Product strategy	Business Objects has a wide variety of technology integration partnerships and differentiates itself strategically by combining an enterprise-class ETL solution with Data Integrator, along with top-tier data quality technology acquired from Firstlogic. When combined with Business Objects' more mature business intelligence and enterprise performance management offerings, a compelling single-vendor information management capability arises. The value proposition presented by the vendor will increase as it continues to improve the integration across these tools.
Corporate strategy	Business Objects' earnings statements placed data integration license revenue at \$27 million for year-end 2005. The contribution of Data Integrator license revenue is 6% of total license revenue. The vendor devoted 15% of 2005 ETL and data integration revenue to ETL R&D.
Cost	The vendor estimates the average Data Integrator deal size for enterprise accounts at approximately \$120,000. Its pricing structure ranges from the midmarket offering at \$25,000 to a comprehensive offering starting at \$175,000. Other add-ons and complementary products are available at additional cost. POCs delivered by sales consultants are typically offered free of charge, assuming the POC scope is limited to within three to five days of on-site engagement. If the scope extends beyond five days, a paid pilot performed by Business Objects Global Services is offered.
Partnerships extending reach	The vendor has reported OEM agreements with 14 partners, and although the vendor has more than 3,000 partners to which all of its value-added resellers can resell the Data Integration products, Forrester believes that a majority focus on Business Objects' BI offerings and not ETL products. The vendor has a strong alliance with SI partners that implement its EIM products, including Data Integrator.

MARKET PRESENCE

Company financials	Forrester estimates that Business Objects has maintained an estimated annual license and service revenue between \$35 million and \$45 million for its ETL and data integration products, and that it has experienced strong growth in its data integration product families over the past three years. The vendor has been profitable with positive net income of \$92.6 million for fiscal year 2005.
Installed base	Business Objects' Data Integrator product has an installed base of approximately 1,600 customers. Forrester estimates new client installations of more than 250 customers in the past four quarters, and that the vendor has, at a minimum, a significant presence in North America and Europe.
Employees	The vendor employs 4,977 individuals as of Q2 2006. Forrester estimates at least 50 developers focused on Business Objects' ETL and data-integration-related offerings. Also as of year-end 2005, there were more than 658 staff in professional services areas of the company.

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.



Go online to download additional in-depth data and scores for this vendor and other vendors included in this Forrester Wave evaluation.

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL

Online Resource

The underlying spreadsheet for Figure 1 is available online. The spreadsheet includes more detailed data and scores for this vendor.

This detailed data and scores for this vendor are also available online through an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

The Forrester Wave Methodology

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don't fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of lab evaluations, questionnaires, demos, and/or discussions with client references. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and readers are encouraged to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Business Objects was evaluated and found to be a leader for BI reporting and analysis platforms. See the February 8, 2006, Tech Choices “[The Forrester Wave™: BI Reporting And Analysis Platforms, Q1 2006](#).”
- ² Business Objects acquired Acta Technology in July 2002. See the July 10, 2002, IdeaByte “[Business Objects Acquires Acta In Its Quest For Real-Time Enterprise Business Intelligence](#).”
- ³ Forrester evaluated leading enterprise extract, transform, and load (ETL) vendors across 68 criteria and found that IBM and Informatica maintain leadership positions in enterprise ETL thanks to their ability to scale and perform batch and operational data integration (DI) in complex environments, as well as to maintain a consistent focus on providing robust data management capabilities. Business Objects and Oracle have also emerged as Leaders with significant usability and scalability improvements, but they are still primarily used in data warehousing environments and have not been widely adopted for operational DI needs. SAS is a Strong Performer, but it remains most attractive as an integrated piece of a SAS BI platform. Ab Initio offers a highly scalable and configurable data processing platform, but its secretive corporate culture limits prospective customers’ visibility into its strategy. iWay Software, Microsoft, Pervasive, and Sunopsis (acquired by Oracle) round out the Strong Performers best suited for a more targeted subset of DI professionals. As a new player in enterprise ETL, Sybase has some of the raw materials needed to develop a competitive solution, but it must integrate the tools it has acquired into a DI suite with a clear differentiation strategy to gain traction in this crowded market. See the May 2, 2007, Tech Choices “[The Forrester Wave™: Enterprise ETL, Q2 2007](#).”