NUCLEUS
RESEARCH

EXAGO USERS SAVE TWO HOURS PER WEEK ON REPORTING

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THE BOTTOM LINE

Exago is an embedded business intelligence (BI) solution that specializes in reporting and dashboarding, with differentiated capabilities in handling tabular data. Nucleus spoke with several Exago customers, who were deploying the software internally or white-labelling it in their own software solutions, to determine the value it delivers. We found that for traditional BI use cases, it is often a significantly cheaper investment than building a homegrown solution, and on average customers saved two hours each week with easy report creation, scheduling, and automation.

THE SOLUTION

Exago is an embedded browser-based business intelligence (BI) solution for reporting and dashboarding. It can be used internally to visualize data and surface insights or embedded within a third-party software product to add intelligence and analytical functionality without embarking on a costly in-house build. Where many analytics vendors look to differentiate themselves based on advanced functionality and capabilities – currently artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning are receiving increased investment – Exago diverges from the pack by focusing on optimizing the two most common user actions: reporting and dashboarding. This ensures fast deployments and high user adoption of the product.

It is an embedded product, meaning customers can build it into other third-party software to support analytics in any environment. Clients can also embed it in their own business applications for internal BI, instead of implementing a standalone solution with a separate workflow and the need for more complicated data connection. Additionally, embedding a solution like Exago (as opposed to building the analytical capabilities internally) is often a more cost-effective decision; it dramatically reduces the strain on internal IT resources and can be deployed in weeks or months, while ground-up software builds can run on for years (Nucleus Research *t17 – When are embedded analytics valuable*, January 2019).

> **One customer saved 10 hours each month by auto-generating daily reports.**

Exago offers flexible reporting with support for pre-packaged templates, custom reports, and automated scheduling for regularly produced reports. Users can create these custom reports in a drag-and-drop designer environment without needing technical expertise. Many competing products are light on capabilities for manipulating and reporting tabular data, but this is a key feature for Exago; it offers differentiated functionality for viewing, manipulating, and reporting tabular data. Customers regularly cite its tabular reporting as a key factor for choosing and continuing to use Exago. Users can also create graphics, charts, and other visualizations with drilldowns to add additional detail and context, which is in line with the broader explainable analytics trend happening across the industry: vendors are looking to make data and analytics more approachable to all business users, regardless of prior mathematics or statistics experience.

The other primary component of the Exago BI solution is dashboarding. In the same drag-and-drop environment, users can create dashboards from templates or from scratch with reports, charts, maps, and other webpages. These dashboards support the same drilldowns

as the reports, allowing users to contextualize data and deliver actionable insights supported by numbers. These dashboards can be customized and resized in a variety of stylings to fit branding and other client specifications.

KEY BENEFITS

After interviewing five customers about their experiences with Exago and its product, Nucleus idenfitied the following key benefits from the BI solution: increased productivity; cost savings; improved report quality and regularity; contributions from generating a new revenue stream; and reliable customer support.

- Increased user productivity. With the added ease of creating reports, customers saved an average of two hours weekly with one customer saving an estimated 10 hours each month by scheduling daily reports. Users transitioned from Excel and other BI tools including Tableau and Jinfonet's JReport (recently acquired by Logi Analytics) and credited the drag-and-drop creation, intuitive user interface, and automation as the biggest time savers.

- Cost savings from redeployed staff and reduced IT demand. By simplifying the reporting process and BI software stack, organizations were able to cut costs in BI and IT areas and redeploy staff to additional value-add tasks. In one case, a small business customer reduced the size of an IT development team by 30 percent after deployment.

- Improved quality and regularity of reporting. Across the board, interviewed customers responded that the quality and reliability of their reporting increased since deployment. With pre-formatted templates and customization capabilities, organizations can standardize reporting across departments and automate their delivery at regular intervals to business leaders and decision makers.

- Contributed to new revenue stream. Customers often white-label the product in their own software to add analytics functionality. Exago's capabilities add value to the overall product and can be attributed with a percentage of the revenues gained.

- Consistent support from Exago and regular product updates. Customers enthusiastically referenced the reliable support they receive from Exago throughout the life-cycle of their business relationship. Customers are confident bringing questions, bugs, and feature requests to Exago to receive fast and valuable support. Additionally, the product is updated regularly with new functionality and performance improvements.

CUSTOMER PROFILES

PRODUCTIVITY SOFTWARE COMPANY

The company is a medium-sized software company that specializes in productivity tools to streamline administrative tasks like handling payments and centralizing documents. It needed a BI solution to simplify its complex data handling processes and automate reporting. It was using a homegrown solution built with Microsoft Access and Excel and needed a solution that was more compact, scalable, and easy-to-use without extensive training.

> **One customer reduced its IT department by 30 percent after deploying Exago.**

The company chose Exago because of the options for customization of reports and dashboards as well as the product's compatibility with its own internal security protocols. It also recognized an opportunity to standardize reporting across departments with the scheduling and auto-generation options.

By opting to embed Exago in its CRM and ERP stack, the company estimates it saved 300 hours by avoiding an internal build and all testing and quality assurance procedures. There were two dedicated agents whose primary role was to manage the scheduling and delivery of reports; after going live with Exago, the company was able to automate scheduling and refocus these agents on other value-add tasks, saving at least two hours per agent weekly in the process.

FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE COMPANY

The company needed a data reporting and visualization tool in one of its applications for facility monitoring. It was using SQL Server Reporting Services but needed a more modern solution that runs faster and is compatible with cloud deployment models. Additionally, the company needed the product to be usable with minimal training or previous experience, support tabular data functions and reporting, and have a clean and modern user interface.

After testing the product and doing a small-scale trial run for three months, the company tested the solution's performance, security, and integration capabilities and determined that its needs were met. To test the product on users, the company asked an entire department to create a report with no prior training and found that every single agent was able to successfully complete the task.

Since deployment, the company has experienced complete user adoption. It cites Exago's consistent and responsive customer support team as a key value driver of the relationship and says that any questions or problems are addressed promptly. Compared to the SQL Server system, a team of 15 users saves an average of 3.5 hours each week creating advanced reports.

FINANCIAL SERVICES INSTITUTION

A financial services institution embedded Exago into its internal workflows to provide reporting and visualization capabilities. The pre-existing reporting solution was inflexible and expensive to support. To cut costs and modernize its reporting, the company looked for a less expensive solution.

After exploring the market for potential solutions (including a short list of Exago, Sisense, and Logi Analytics), the institution selected Exago for its affordable pricing model, ease-of-implementation and onboarding, and scalability. The bank leveraged Exago support to train a cadre of 10 power users that would provide peer-support when the solution went fully live.

The implementation took five months where some earlier software deployments had taken years (the customer referenced one ongoing project with another vendor that was over two years old and still not fully functional), which convinced the bank it made the correct choice. The reporting quality is substantially improved (with no increase in costs) and the entire user base produces over 5,000 reports daily, saving one hour weekly per user by a conservative estimate when compared to the legacy reporting tool.

CONCLUSION

In a crowded and competitive BI market, Exago has found its niche to succeed and grow. Instead of attempting to compete with market participants in the functionality arena, Exago looked to master the common, everyday functions of reporting and dashboarding for those use cases that do not require advanced functionality like artificial intelligence. This also simplifies deployment and onboarding, allowing customers to go from data to insights faster than could be achieved with many competing products. By focusing on overall usability and streamlining the most commonly performed roles instead of attempting to achieve feature parity with larger, more established vendors, Exago has successfully carved out a niche in the greater BI market and looks to be on track for growth moving forward. As more customers realize that enterprise-class analytics are overkill for more traditional reporting-centric use cases, we expect the demand for a more focused and compact product like Exago will continue to pick up steam.