

# Enterprise Performance Management

*Driving Organizational Performance  
with Strategic Business Intelligence*



**AUTHOR:** Mark Hammond

**CONTRIBUTORS:** Cortney Claiborne, Davythe Dicochea, Jennifer Meegan, Patrick Morrissey

# Introduction



They say you can never have too much information—but you do. You’ve got dozens of reports and emails on your system—marketing campaigns, product recalls, Q2 revenue targets—and prioritizing this information presents a real challenge. You still haven’t opened those sales forecast spreadsheets from October. Your quarterly report is due Friday. Your phone is ringing again. You’ve got a meeting in 10 minutes.

And then there’s the \$64,000 question: How is my organization performing today? It’s a simple question but amid the chaos of a normal workday, it’s almost impossible to answer.

There is little solace in the fact that you are not alone. Your colleagues are probably in the same boat. In many companies, executives and managers are suffering from a severe case of TMI (too much information). TMI is hazardous to your health and, if ignored, can trigger a meltdown of your business.

What’s the solution? Many organizations are turning to enterprise performance management (EPM).

EPM works with your existing systems to intelligently structure information and processes so that you can understand and act. EPM is driven from a strategic foundation of business intelligence (BI) systems common across an organization. It helps turn information from an enemy into an ally. Let’s take a look at how it works.

# EPM: Powerful Simplicity



EPM is a slippery term that is difficult to define. It has a few aliases such as corporate performance management (CPM) and business performance management (BPM), but what is it?

Simply put, EPM is a strategic approach to improving business performance. Gartner Inc., a research and analyst firm, defines EPM as, “an umbrella term that describes the methodologies, metrics, processes, and systems used to monitor and manage the business performance of an enterprise. CPM is an important concept: it represents the strategic deployment of business intelligence solutions.”<sup>1</sup> (Gartner uses the term CPM, rather than EPM, but the two are synonymous).

EPM has three fundamental ingredients:

**Metrics:** Up-to-the-minute snapshots of your key performance indicators (KPIs) in a personalized, web-based dashboard to enable fast, proactive decisions and organizational agility.

**Business intelligence:** Enterprise software designed to track, understand, and manage information. BI enables decision makers to manage by exception, stay informed with alerts, and drill into data to examine the root cause of business conditions.

**Methodology:** A systematic and sustainable means of tracking, measuring, and improving business performance, applied top-down throughout the enterprise.



*Personalized dashboards and scorecards provide a powerful way to manage and monitor key metrics.*

<sup>1</sup> Gartner AV-16-3211, “CPM: A Strategic Deployment of BI Applications,” N. Rayner, May 9, 2002.



## **Metrics: A Dashboard on Business Performance**

You wouldn't pull weeds in the backyard while your house burns down. Prioritization is a key to success in any endeavor. But how do you determine what's important to your organization and what's not?

*Simplicity* is fundamental to EPM. It begins with the most basic questions—how is our organization doing today? Is everything running according to plan? If not, how do we get back on track? EPM can intelligently sort through the vast amount of data in your enterprise to provide simple answers to each of those questions.

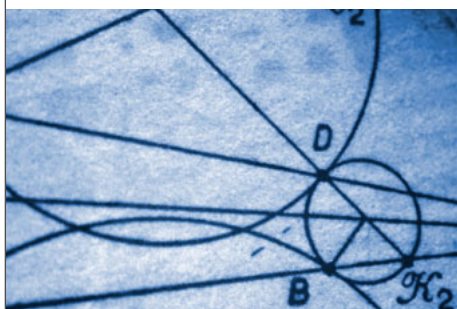
To answer these questions and benefit from EPM, you need a web-enabled dashboard that serves up highly visual, easily understood metrics and KPIs. EPM dashboards are configured to zero in on the metrics that matter most to an executive or manager. Problem areas are red-flagged for the user's immediate attention. The dashboard serves as a real-time barometer and benchmark platform of business conditions and helps put the decision maker in control.

## **Business Intelligence: The Devil in the Details**

Metrics and key performance indicators are critical, but are usually just that—indicators. A manager will often want to know more about the business dynamics behind those data points—Why are sales up? What's our fastest growing product? Why are inventory costs rising?

To answer those questions, the EPM dashboard lets you drill through to underlying data for analysis, comparisons, and answers. Today's BI tools make it simple for non-technical users to run queries and generate reports that are easily shared with colleagues. You can explore details of who, what, when, where, why, and how for the insights you need to fine tune processes for maximum performance. The devil is in the details, as they say, and BI provides a surefire means of flushing him out.

Critical to any EPM solution is an integrated, enterprise-wide view of data drawn from various sources—finance, sales, supply chain, and more—that would otherwise have to be cherry picked by hand. Concealed from the user is a powerful back-end data access and integration platform that taps into those disparate systems.



## Methodology: A Framework for Enterprise Alignment

EPM typically applies a systematic methodology across management and business processes. The objective of the methodology is to monitor, measure, and improve performance in a structured environment that is common across all business units.

Corporations realize the greatest ROI when a methodology is integrated with metrics-driven dashboards and robust BI capabilities. As noted by Gartner Inc., “Methodologies on their own cannot deliver a full solution to an enterprise’s CPM needs. Many pure methodology implementations fail to deliver the anticipated benefits because they are not integrated with the fundamental CPM processes.”<sup>2</sup>

A methodology gives management a collaborative, top-down framework by which to align planning and execution, strategy and tactics, and business unit and enterprise objectives. Common methodologies include six sigma, balanced scorecard, activity-based costing, total quality management, economic value-add, and integrated strategic measurement (developed by EDS subsidiary, A.T. Kearney). The methodology used to decide how to track and measure performance can help an organization determine which metrics are most important and define how these metrics should be measured. The use of standard definitions promotes consistency and an improved decision-making process throughout an organization.

## EPM: Process Drives Performance

Before the days of sonar, GPS, and mobile phones, traveling by sea was a risky business. Transoceanic voyages could take several months and were often plagued by freak storms and weak currents. In order for a ship to arrive at its destination on time and with few casualties, it was imperative that those on board follow an established process. Before setting sail, sailors would chart a course based on the stars. During the journey, the course would be checked regularly and adjusted as needed. And each crewmember, from the captain to the cabin boy, played a key role and understood what his day-to-day responsibilities were.

Today, organizations are run using a similar process—the captains of the industry, the board of directors, the executive team, and managers at all levels plan a course and set goals. Those goals and objectives—central region target of 15% sales increase over the prior year, line efficiency of 85%, 97% on-time delivery, 2% improvement in customer

<sup>2</sup> Gartner: SPA 18-8766, “Put Corporate Performance Management to the Test in 2003,” L. Geishecker and F. Buytendijk, December 2002.



satisfaction—spread throughout the entire organization and cascade down to individual employees in each department. Every employee has goals and targets to support that drive his or her daily activity. And the organizational course is reevaluated on a regular basis and adjusted as needed.

EPM brings this process to life and closes the performance loop between the high-level strategies and daily execution. Annual plans can be mapped back to daily to-do lists. The executive level goals can now be translated to department and functional area metrics and measures to keep the organization in alignment and drive consistency between annual plans and daily activity.

### **Manage Metrics: Monitoring Daily Activity and Performance**

You can't manage what you can't measure. In order to achieve a goal, you need to measure daily activity in support of goals and track progress towards results. In order to improve performance, you need to focus on key metrics to ensure accountability and consistency. EPM allows managers to drive a process that connects metrics to goals to people. With dashboards, each employee and department can view the metrics that are important to them and manage to individual targets (i.e., sales by region, cost of sales, margin, etc). Those targets can then be rolled up across functional areas, departments, and business lines to provide high-level views of your organization's performance. Dashboards provide a consistent way to track actual activity and results with benchmarks and thresholds to measure against. They also provide a quick way for each person to see how they are doing so they can improve performance, speed, and effectiveness.



*Enterprise performance management is a process that connects goals, metrics, and people in order to drive improved management, analysis, and action across the organization.*



### **Analyze: Understanding the Impact**

Where there is smoke, there is fire. Getting a heads-up alert that something is off track is often the difference between a minor disruption and a major problem. However it is also critical to not only know that something is happening, but to understand why. A successful EPM approach involves more than monitoring metrics—it also requires deeper analytic capability to perform root-cause analysis. This allows executives, managers, and owners to receive alerts in time to take action (e.g. sales in the central region are 10% below target). At the same time, their teams can start to dig into the details to gain insight into the business drivers, causes, and long-term implications (e.g. sales person performance, product and service mix, promotional effectiveness). EPM gives employees at all levels and roles the analytic capability they need to help them better understand the impact that various alerts have on business, and allow them to act quickly to correct potential problems before they happen.

### **Decide: Closing the Loop**

Connecting goals to metrics to people in order to monitor day-to-day activity results in business transparency and smart decisions at all levels. All employees will be armed with the information they need to drive activity and actions in support of high-level goals (e.g. launch a marketing campaign to support central region, focus on products A, B, F). Daily execution can be tied back to top-line objectives to ensure alignment across the organization. At the same time, new decisions can be made that drive incremental change to steer the organizational ship back on course. Most importantly, everyone can keep track of how they are doing. Closing this loop with an EPM strategy means your entire organization can make informed decisions, drive immediate action, and stay focused on what is most important.

# EPM: A New Twist to an Old Challenge



Is EPM new? Not really. Organizations have always sought to manage and improve their performance. In fact, most have elements of EPM already in place. A decade or two ago, these efforts took the form of executive information systems (EIS). EIS systems were well intentioned, but required prodigious amounts of proprietary development and maintenance by information technology (IT) staff. The lag time between a manager's request for information and its delivery was often weeks and by then, business conditions had changed and an opportunity had been lost. For the business side, the ROI from EIS systems was mixed.

Despite differences between EPM and older approaches such as EIS, the objectives are largely the same. With EPM, strategy formulation feeds into a closed-loop process by which an organization sets goals, monitors performance metrics, analyzes information, makes proactive decisions, and acts on those decisions.

Today, there are two truths about EPM:

*EPM is harder than ever:* Your organization has more information than ever before. It's scattered across different applications, business units, subsidiaries, and geographic locations. Information is unprecedented in volume and complexity, and growing by the day. In more than a few organizations, this data deluge is metastasizing into a crisis that threatens their very ability to survive in the 21st century.

The overpopulation principle described by the 18th century English clergyman Thomas Robert Malthus is in play here—if population increases unchecked, the inevitable result is breakdown, poverty, and chaos. This Malthusian specter now confronts all organizations, not in regards to unchecked growth in numbers of people, but unchecked growth in the volume of data.

*EPM is easier than ever:* EPM reflects more than a decade of development and refinement of business management and BI products. Over the years, the technology that enables EPM has become more powerful, more reliable, and easier to use. With dashboards, metrics, alerts, real-time data integration, and analytic tools, EPM makes information available at a moment's notice—as opposed to the lag time of a week or longer associated with ancestral EIS systems. And of course, quantum leaps in server performance, data storage capacity, and other technologies have helped make EPM a practical and compelling solution.

EPM also incorporates best practices that industries and consultancies have developed through years of trial and error. Each company chooses a methodology or combination of methodologies that suits its needs. Software supporting such common methodologies as six sigma and balanced scorecard feature built-in best practices and process flow. With a minimal learning curve, EPM gives managers a proven and consistent framework from which to track, understand, and manage business performance.

# Take Charge of your Business Information



So EPM is both harder *and* easier—and more important than ever.

EPM is fast emerging as a potent weapon for business in today's take-no-prisoners environment. By the end of 2002, Gartner estimates that only 10 percent of large enterprises will have implemented solutions for corporate performance management. But by 2005, Gartner estimates that adoption will increase to 40 percent.<sup>3</sup>

The reasons are legion. For many companies, revenue is down, and profit margins are threatened. Competition for customers is increasingly fierce. Spending needs to be reduced, and business cycles need to be tightened. In the wake of the dot.com crash, as well as Enron and other high-profile accounting scandals, companies are under more pressure than ever to satisfy discriminating investors and regulators. Companies need to make better decisions, faster.

## **Proactive. Predictive. Precise.**

EPM solutions put you in the driver's seat, with the ability to be:

**Proactive:** Speed is the critical factor. You're in trouble if it takes two weeks for news of manufacturing problems at a key supplier to bubble up and demand your attention. By then, you face the risk of a costly slowdown in your own procurement, manufacturing, and fulfillment processes. You have to scramble to purchase from a rival supplier—but that supplier needs two weeks advance notice to fulfill an order. Net result: trouble.

EPM solutions are easily configured to alert you to problems in mission-critical areas as they happen. If a key supplier is hit with a labor strike, or a problem with a new product has triggered a surge in customer complaints to your support center, you don't find out about it at a dinnertime call to your cell phone on the second Tuesday of next month. You find out immediately. It's red-flagged on top of your EPM dashboard.

**Predictive:** Business is nothing if not dynamic. Knowing what's up and what's down requires you to examine all of its elements: Time of year. Geographic region. Color of merchandise. Price of product. Customer demographics. R&D costs. Return rates. Labor costs. In too many organizations today, those dimensions and many more are shaken up like a cup of dice. Whether the roll is a profitable one is too often left to chance.

<sup>3</sup> Gartner: SPA 18-8766, "Put Corporate Performance Management to the Test in 2003," L. Geishecker and F. Buytendijk, December 2002.

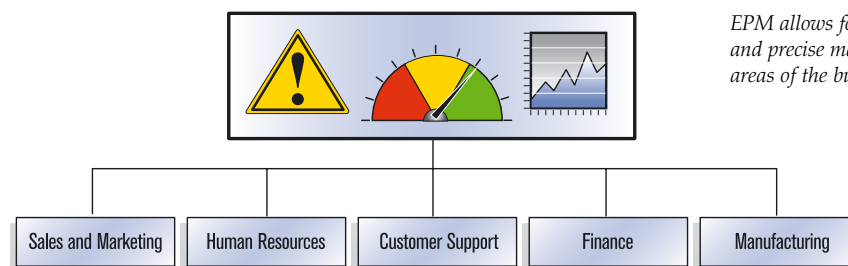


EPM minimizes the element of chance. It enables managers to easily collate, analyze, and drill into historical and external data to ascertain optimum pricing, spending, delivery, and service. Those insights are essential to predicting conditions and adapting accordingly.

**Precise:** The margin for error has diminished. A fast-paced economy captained by fickle consumers magnifies missteps. Precise execution requires precise data—quality information that is consistent across the enterprise. More than ever, one accurate, integrated view is a prerequisite for success.

EPM helps provide quality assurance for your information. Because it's tied to standardization on one BI tool, a common enterprise data model, and a common methodology, it ensures that executives and managers throughout the enterprise work from a single version of the truth.

In many cases, the back-end processes that integrate data from customer, supply chain, finance, and other applications to support BI and EPM improve an organization's overall informational quality by turning inconsistent data into a cohesive whole. Strategically implemented, EPM often involves back-end solutions that address the pernicious problem of poor data quality, which The Data Warehousing Institute, an association for BI education and research, estimates costs U.S. businesses more than \$600 billion a year.



*EPM allows for proactive, predictive, and precise management across all areas of the business.*

# The EPM Edge: Strategic Synchronization



EPM is not so much a revolution as an evolution. Your organization is chock-full of data management systems. You've got applications for enterprise resource planning, finance, online commerce, and databases full of supplier, customer, and product information. And manufacturing, logistics, human resources (HR), and others each have their own application infrastructure.

EPM builds on those existing resources. It does not require you to rip out and replace the systems that run your organization. Rather, it complements them with powerful tools for prioritization, monitoring, navigation, and analysis. EPM allows you to leverage your existing infrastructure to support enterprise-wide goal tracking and metrics management.

An EPM solution is configured to draw from various data sources and serve up timely information in a personalized dashboard. It gives the CEO, for instance, a one-stop shop for tracking key indicators in sales, finance, supply chain, marketing, HR, product management, and others. The intuitive dashboard resting on the BI system invites ad hoc exploration of more detailed data underlying high-level information.

## **Alignment, Visibility, and Collaboration**

EPM enables strategic synchronization of different parts and new visibility into the business as a whole. Marketing is aligned with CRM analysis. Procurement is in step with the revenue cycle. Demand planning and manufacturing are informed by inventory and sales. Product development takes advantage of intelligence from customer support. As a result, you can:

- Monitor and measure performance against goals across sales, finance, budgeting, planning, supply chain, customer and product management, and marketing

- Align and optimize technologies and business processes, tactics and strategies, resources and objectives, business unit and corporate goals

- Focus and execute on bottom-line business drivers across divisions to enhance enterprise-wide performance

- Collaborate and communicate atop a scalable web-based BI framework for faster, smarter decision making

- Analyze and anticipate revenue cycles, supply chain and product performance, customer behavior, and more

# EPM for Customer Insight



But EPM isn't exclusively for CEOs. It's also ideal for managers of individual business and functional units. When deployed uniformly across an organization, EPM ensures that managers from the CEO down are on the same page and speaking the same language—a key to alignment and collaboration. Let's take a look at how EPM can help improve performance in key areas.

Customers are a mercurial bunch. One day they love you, the next day they hate you. But do you know why? You should because your success depends on it.

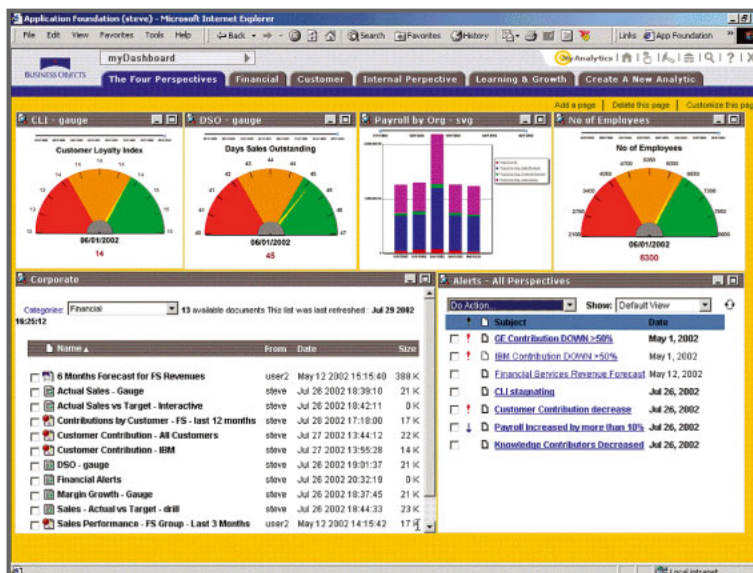
EPM helps sales, marketing, and CRM management keep pace with the fast-moving data behind customer activity. Software with prebuilt metrics, best-practice analytics, and alerts cut to the quick by making it easy to monitor and respond to sales and customer developments. EPM solutions may be deployed to zero in on subsets, such as sales, contact center, marketing campaigns, and CRM analytics. With EPM, you can:

- Monitor key metrics that affect pipeline, close rate, and revenue performance

- Measure sales against pricing, geographies, competitors, channels, and customer demographics

- Assess customer value over time and segment the customer base for targeted marketing and intelligent cross-sell and up-sell execution

- Correlate support center inquiries with sales performance to identify and correct problem areas



*Sales and marketing management can see an immediate improvement in performance when using dashboards to monitor customer activity and behavior.*

# EPM for Supply Chain Management



Probably no area in the enterprise cries out for greater efficiency than the supply chain. Opportunities for cost reductions abound, and companies that have mastered supply chain management (Wal-Mart and Dell Computer, for instance) with just-in-time delivery and build-to-order systems have enjoyed meteoric growth. Yet more than a few companies are challenged to simply name their top 10 suppliers.

EPM provides a powerful layer on top of an organization's supply chain infrastructure that helps managers track key indicators, learn instantly of crucial developments, identify threats and opportunities, and drill into data for insights that help reduce costs and accelerate processes. This gives organizations the ability to close the loop between top-line targets and day-to-day activity.

EPM lends itself to deployment across the entire supply chain, or within individual functions defined by the Supply-Chain Council as plan, source, make, deliver, and return. With EPM, you can:

*Plan:* EPM helps managers balance planning with demand to reduce costs, improve asset utilization, tighten procurement and manufacturing cycles, and enhance product quality

*Source:* EPM enables monitoring of supplier performance, sending instant alerts regarding disruptions, and analyzing cost, materials quality, and schedule

*Make:* EPM provides a real-time radar screen on manufacturing conditions to help management respond to problems, scale production up or down, and improve throughput and resource management

*Deliver:* EPM tracks logistics status by the minute to allow fine tuning of inbound and outbound delivery, reduced inventory and transportation costs, and optimized carrier and route selection

*Return:* EPM aids in returns management by tracking top product returns, and enabling cost analysis and improved product quality and customer satisfaction

# EPM for Finance and Human Resources



Budgeting and planning are crucial processes for any organization. But these days, as cash flow crests and dips like a Nasdaq chart and business grows more complex, it's more difficult to budget and plan accurately. To boot, heightened attention to accounting practices has upped the ante for rigorous financial management.

And human resources presents challenges of its own. With widely dispersed workforces and high turnover, organizations recognize a need to improve HR management, from recruitment to retirement. With its rich metrics and analytic drill-through, EPM enables HR decision makers to contain costs, structure compensation packages, select third-party benefit providers, optimize recruitment, and retain and develop employees.

With its methodological foundation and reach across the enterprise, EPM bolsters the ability to budget and plan with spot-on accuracy. As the analyst firm IDC puts it, "Budgeting and planning should be linked to a foundational analytic approach to build the models for consistently deriving measures of cost, profit, and value. The future of budgeting and planning applications is to become part of a broader financial and business performance management suite."<sup>4</sup> With EPM for finance, departments and functional areas across an organization can monitor and better understand the financial impact of daily business activity. Managers can:

- Track key financial indicators from units across the business

- Improve budgeting, planning, and forecasting through structured methodologies and common analytic framework

- Increase revenue cycle efficiency and optimize quote-to-payment processes

- Build flexible "what-if" models through proactive, predictive analytics

<sup>4</sup> IDC, "Budgeting, Planning and the Three Levels of Analytic Applications," Henry Morris, October 2002.

# Conclusion



Gradually, organizations are building EPM systems based on a strategic deployment of BI across the enterprise. As systems mature and companies synchronize among sales, supply chain, finance, and other systems, business performance as a whole will improve. Customers will expect to see better service, operations will continue to be more and more streamlined, and investors will reap greater dividends, from businesses across all industries. And all of this is the result of an improved process to connect top-line goals to day-to-day activity across the organization.

But a rising tide does not necessarily lift all ships. As time goes by, organizations that neglect the sound principles of EPM inevitably forsake opportunities to enhance revenue, reduce spending, build customer loyalty, and achieve competitive advantage.

As Gartner notes, “Enterprises that measure, monitor, and manage performance in a piecemeal fashion via a myriad of disparate business applications will more often than not fail to meet their strategic goals. In today’s economy, the need to address business challenges, including the transformation into an agile enterprise able to meet global business requirements, will compel many enterprises to abandon their ‘siloes’ approaches of the past for the more strategic and holistic corporate performance management approach.”<sup>5</sup>

The integrated cross-functional discipline of EPM—as opposed to one-off reporting systems in different divisions—is a big step towards prosperity, today and in the future.

## **Success with Business Objects Performance Management: TruServ Finds True Value in Business Intelligence**

Even in a lukewarm economy, retail spending on “nesting” goods has remained brisk. It’s been a period of hearth and home for many consumers, and TruServ, a leading home improvement concern, is capitalizing on the opportunity with metrics-driven executive dashboards and data analysis software from Business Objects.

Based in Chicago, TruServ is the Fortune 1000 parent company of such retailers as True Value Hardware, Home & Garden Showplace, Party Central, and Taylor Rental. It’s a member-owned cooperative that supports more than 6,800 independent retailers worldwide, recording 2001 sales of \$2.6 billion and estimated retailer sales of \$12 billion.

Its goal: “To help customers improve, beautify and repair their No. 1 investment—their home.” If financial performance is any indicator, TruServ is meeting its goal—and then some. Through the third quarter 2002, TruServ has recorded nine consecutive months of profitability; third-quarter profit alone had improved by \$34.8 million compared to a year earlier.

<sup>5</sup> Gartner: SPA 18-8766, “Put Corporate Performance Management to the Test in 2003,” L. Geishecker and F. Buytendijk, December 2002.



TruServ attributes its success in part to its deployment of BI and performance management applications from Business Objects. The Business Objects solution replaced mainframe legacy applications that had managers reporting on data that was months old. Its True Value Hardware unit, for one, uses Business Objects analytic and dashboard applications to optimize promotions and pricing—and the results warranted attention in eWeek, a leading information technology trade magazine.

Neil Hastie, TruServ's CIO, told eWeek magazine that Business Objects software helps managers analyze customer response to as many as 200 discounted True Value products each month. Those insights help managers fine-tune pricing, production, and promotions to meet customer demands and spur more business.

"We can watch [product movement] velocity at our distribution centers and see how they're affected by the price changes," Hastie said. "If we reduce the price by two points, say, we can see if we're making up the lost margins with velocity." With the Business Objects solution, TruServ has realized measurable improvements in efficiency. "Prior to installing BusinessObjects, we had a lot of unproductive inventory sitting in warehouses," he told eWeek.<sup>6</sup>

Across its lines of business, TruServ has rolled out digital dashboards with metrics that managers track and analyze to improve customer relationships, reduce costs, and increase revenue. They're built on BusinessObjects Application Foundation, an analytic framework that uses time-series analysis to cut through volumes of data to serve up key insights that pinpoint trends and crucial fluctuations. In addition, hundreds of TruServ employees use Business Objects software to access, analyze, and share the latest information on sales, marketing, logistics, and inventory.

TruServ is bullish on the results—and the promise of continued improvement. "In the past several years, business intelligence has emerged as a strategic initiative at TruServ," Hastie said. "With Business Objects, TruServ will better understand our customers, and we'll be able to improve our service by offering them sales items that best meet their needs. In addition, using the executive dashboard, our managers will be armed with more valuable data on operations, which will assist our sales efforts and inventory management."

<sup>6</sup> Callaghan, Dennis. "Playing the Pricing Game," eWeek, December 9, 2002.





**Americas**

Business Objects Americas  
3030 Orchard Parkway  
San Jose, California 95134  
USA  
Tel: +1 408 953 6000  
+1 800 877 2340

**Asia-Pacific**

Business Objects Asia Pacific Pte Ltd  
2 Shenton Way  
#18-02/06 SGX Centre 1  
Singapore 068804  
Tel: +65 6416 6500

**Europe, Middle East, Africa**

Business Objects SA  
157-159 rue Anatole France  
92309 Levallois-Perret Cedex  
France  
Tel: +33 1 41 25 21 21

**Japan**

Business Objects Japan K.K.  
Head Office  
Yebisu Garden Place Tower 28F  
4-20-3 Ebisu, Shibuya-ku  
Tokyo 150-6028  
Tel: +81 3 5447 3900

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