BBBT Podcast Transcript

About the BBBT

The Boulder Business Intelligence Brain Trust, or BBBT, was founded in 2006 by Claudia Imhoff. Its mission is to leverage business intelligence for industry vendors, for its members, who are independent analysts and experts, and for its subscribers, who are practitioners. To accomplish this mission, the BBBT provides a variety of services, centered around vendor presentations.

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Host:	**Claudia Imhoff**, President, BBBT
Guest(s):	**Chris Twogood**, VP of Product and Services Marketing
	John Thuma, Director of Aster Strategy
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Claudia Imhoff: Hello, and welcome to this edition of the Boulder BI Brain Trust, or the BBBT. We're a gathering of international consultants, analysts, and experts in business intelligence, who meet with interesting and innovative BI companies here in beautiful Boulder, Colorado. We not only get briefed on the latest news and releases, but we share our ideas with the vendor on where the BI industry is going, and help them with their technological directions and marketing messages. I'm Claudia Imhoff and the BBBT podcasts are produced by my company, Intelligent Solutions.

I'm so happy to introduce my guests today. They are Chris Twogood and John Thuma. Chris is the Vice President of Product and Services Marketing, and John is the Director of Aster Strategy for Teradata. Welcome to you both.

Chris Twogood: Glad to be here.

John Thuma: Absolutely.

CI: Chris, let's start with you. Boy, oh, boy. You mentioned a number of significant announcements today. Why don't we start with those? If you don't mind, let's go through them.

CT: We made three pretty significant announcements last week at Hadoop Summit. All three of those are about really adding value on top of Hadoop. The most significant of those was the fact that we committed to contributing to a multi-year, multi-phase, pure 100 percent commitment to Presto for open source.

Within those phases, we're doing things to really help Presto with the adoption, so things like installers, like YARN integration, Ambari integration, things like ODBC and BI certification and building out new connectors. The other key thing about that announcement is Presto, historically, has not had a commercial support option. Teradata is now taking that on.

Now, Presto is just a great solution for SQL on Hadoop that people can go download and leverage all the great work that Facebook's done. In fact, you can go up to teradata.com/presto and download it for free now, 100 percent open source.

The other two announcements we made last week at Hadoop Summit was a RainStor 7. Since our acquisition of RainStor, this is the first product that we've brought to market. RainStor does a great job as an archive app on top of Hadoop. Our announcement extends QueryGrid integration with it, UDFs, as well as some packaging options for system level archive, online archive, and regulatory archive.

The last announcement at Hadoop Summit was Loom 2.5. This is really metadata, data lineage, data wrangling, all on top of Hadoop, to really help people understand what's going on within their data lake, and very specifically, we added some extensibility and sub-security features.

Those were all about the Hadoop Summit. The week before, we announced some fast JSON support for Teradata Database, both BSON and UBSON to be able to get JSON data type streaming straight into the data warehouse.

We're really excited about all four of those announcements that we'd made recently.

CI: They were pretty significant. I have to admit. John, let me bring you into the conversation. Teradata certainly has focused a lot of effort on behavioral analytics. Why is that?

JT: We've always been behavioral analytically bound. If you look at the last 20 to 30 years, we've been focused on transactions. Transactions are sales or conversions, or "Company A bought from Company B," or banking transactions.

They're all the things that did happen.

Really, the focus on behavioral is really on interaction. That means that these are all the behaviors and all of the actions that people took in order to actually get to a transaction. More importantly, it's all the things that didn't end up in a transaction that still matter.

What we try to do is bring in interaction data. That could be website, click stream data. That could be CRM customer notes. That could be a lot of different behaviors across many different channels that a business has.

Those behaviors, even if they didn't resolve to a transaction, those are still critical, because we still want to evaluate those.

CI: You want to know the whys, not just what they did, but why they did it, right?

JT: Or what they didn't do.

CI: Or what they didn't do.

JT: Which is just as important, because we want to convert more. I call it path jumping or behavioral path jumping.

We want to get somebody on a buying path. Or we want to get someone onto a proper rather than an optimal path for the organization. What do we do to actually influence their path to stay with us, or transact with us, or convert? That, to me, is what behavior analytics is all about.

CI: Let's go back to you, Chris, a little bit on the app center. That was a big part of the event today. Teradata has created what they call the AppCenter. It helps an enterprise move toward this new world of these expanded customer analytics, I guess you would call it. Why don't you tell me a little bit about those, what's available, what are they, and so forth.

CT: It's interesting. In the market today, there's this focus around customer experience management, and how do you understand the customer journey and how do you understand the customer's digital moment when they interact with you. It's interesting because these are things we've been talking about forever.

To John's point with this new behavioral data, our ability through digital footprints to understand what customers are doing, how they're going across multiple channels, how they're interacting, when they're having good experiences, when they're having bad experiences, these things become very critical to being able to understand how we should treat them, how we should act with them, and things that we should do to maintain, upsell, cross-sell, and create loyalty within the organization.

With this onslaught of all this big data and behavioral analytics, what we found is the demand to get insight into it is actually bigger than the number of data scientists that were available to go do the work.

We really developed Aster AppCenter to really help cross the chasm, to be able to give analytics, and be able to analyze customer behavior out to a broader set of users, so that they can run their own analytics using very complex algorithms, but having it be under the covers. Then have them understand how to really treat and act and deliver for customers to improve revenue, and also reduce cost in terms of service. AppCenter is a great empowerment solution for that.

JT: You don't have to pay a data scientist to participate anymore. That's what AppCenter does.

CI: It does. It's more or less a template for people to play around with the data to get familiar without having the incredible skills that a data scientist might have, right?

JT: That's right. It's a point-and-click interface. It's as pervasive to use as your iPhone or your smartphone.

CI: Maybe for you it is.

JT: With a little bit of training, I'll have you up and running about 5, 10 minutes.

CI: I will hold you to that.

CT: Remember, John is a data scientist himself. It's more for me in using the applications.

CI: Very simple for him. What's delivered then? What do you get when you go into the AppCenter? What does the architecture look like?

CT: Aster AppCenter really sits on top of the Aster discovery platform. The Aster Discovery Platform, itself, has a foundation of being able to store data in columns, or rows, or a file store. On top of that, it has a broad range of different engines. They're all first class engines, a graph engine, a map reduce engine, a SQL engine.

Then our SNAP Framework helps tie all those together, so it makes it easy for users through a common SQL interface to invoke very complex analytics.

On top of that, we have these 150 different functions that enable us to do path analysis, pattern analysis, and text analysis. All that infrastructure is underneath AppCenter.

AppCenter sits on top of that. AppCenter delivers a set of services that make it easy for our customers to build out apps, or also for us to deploy apps. AppCenter has a portal where you can go in, and you can search for different apps that are available. You can index them in there. You can collaborate with others.

It has a set of lower level services like auditing, logging, and linking down to data access, and some visualization. It also has a set of REST APIs, where you can push out to standard BI and discovery tools out in the marketplace.

What we've done on top of the AppCenter, is built out these packaged big data apps so that business users don't have to worry about that whole stack of architectural components. They can just select drop-downs, run the analytic, understand the analytic, and go put it into actions. We're pretty excited about this.

CI: I am, too. John, you gave us two examples of many of the apps that you have, two examples within those apps. If you don't mind, tell me a little bit about these two, and then tell me what else is available in this AppCenter.

JT: Absolutely. Let's start with AppCenter generally first, and then we'll get into CSI, and on-site search. Basically, what we've developed is a set of templates, or examples of what you could do with Aster.

It includes all the data, and all of the analytics, and everything else. It comes with these apps across many varieties of vertical industry, such as healthcare, retail, banking, telecommunications, gaming, and hospitality.

The ability to be able to go into your subject matter area, and be able to do things like retail attribution. Or to go in and do all the paths to a certain

surgery, or to be able to look at gaming infrastructure and be able to see who are my influential players that have the biggest networks, and things like that.

They're not necessarily apps that are ready to go for your organization. They're apps of the art of the possible with your organization.

Jumping to CSI, Satisfaction Indexing...

CI: The Customer Satisfaction...

JT: The Customer Satisfaction Indexing, this is really a bundled application that we offer up that is a framework. It's not a one size fits all. You're not going to drop this application into a customer, and just walk away and it works, because there are so many things that are unique about a customer.

These are framework applications that come with a data model. They come with the analytics. They come with the pre-built interface, and the AppCenter application is ready to go.

What this one does is it basically looks across an entire enterprise, and allows you to create your own rules across your data to see where my enterprise is breaking down, and causing ill effect, or problems in my satisfaction, or where they're actually causing positive satisfaction. By being able to do that across multiple channels, it's really impactful.

CT: John, one of the things that I've certainly seen is that a lot of marketing organizations, they go out and they run their NPS scores, and they do it once a quarter. They're like, "Oh, that represents the sentiment of my customers." Frankly, that is so yesteryear.

JT: Absolutely.

CI: It's so 1990.

CT: It is, because today, you want to be able to understand not some survey that I hit somebody with that I'm not even sure if he was the right person, or was in the right mood. You want to actually capture all the events.

What are the events that caused the service outage, or what are the events that caused something positive within their environment? CSI really helps drive great integration.

JT: Absolutely, and it comes back to that second question that was asked today about behavioral analytics. It's all those interactions that people have with your business, or with your company across all those varieties of different channels, and whether or not those experiences are causing an ill effect to your company.

I really like in the CSI application as a preventative churn…

CI: …Mechanism… Yeah. You're right, Chris. People are fickle. They will change their mind because of a bad experience. If you wait three months to figure that out, they're gone, right?

CT: If that scales across your entire enterprise, it could be a major impact...

CI: Disastrous.

CT: Especially now when companies are just...Their new customer engagements are basically taking customers from competitors.

CI: Yeah, you don't want that revolving door. Another one you told me about was on-site search. Why don't you tell me a little bit about that one?

JT: Absolutely. We've all, on Saturday afternoon, have gone off to our favorite dot-com, our favorite retailer, bank, or our insurance company. We put in a search term. If that search term doesn't render the result that we're looking for, we may or may not leave that organization.

What on-site search tries to do is basically optimize that situation by looking at labels of previous searches that actually resulted in transactions or conversions. Then we use those in a predictive analytic to be able to determine what are the keywords that actually resulted in a transaction.

Then we feed those keywords back into the e-commerce site, and we were, on average, able to add about 25 additional words to each product, or each service that identifies that search. That results in more conversions, about two to five percent, which is significant.

CT: What surprised me about this is, we've actually seen anywhere from 30 to 40 percent where people abandoned because they don't get the search that they want. What's also interesting is there's a big trend, because more and more people are using mobile, they're going away from browsing, and they're doing more search. Having key terms that match what the consumer is expecting is absolutely critical.

The other thing we see is that companies want to do this multiple times per day. This isn't something you do once a year. It's a really important analytic to drive significant e-commerce on your site.

JT: It, too, comes with a framework, right? A data model, and it comes with the analytics. You can also push this into a scaled set of data. What we do is, we take your click stream data for the last couple of years, and all your site search that's embedded in there, and we actually do analytics for silent abandonment. We do other customer behavior analytics while we're doing this.

To Chris's point, we can run this on a frequency that matters, because there's all kinds of new keywords that are coming out daily and new words are being invented every day.

CI: Yes. You came up with a few today that I'd never heard of. Real quick, we got a couple of minutes left. Where can people learn more about the AppCenter?

JT: We just constructed a new community, aster-community.teradata.com. You can go out there, and you can watch videos. You can go participate across not only AppCenter, but you can also participate in our analytics.

To make it even easier, open up a Google search, and type in "learn Aster AppCenter," and that'll take you to two videos where it'll teach you how to write your first app. It's a simple app. Then it'll take you down to a little more challenging app as well. You can also learn the business value of AppCenter, and all of our analytics, too.

CI: Excellent. Chris, let me end up with you. Last question. We've got about a minute or so, so not a whole lot of time for this one. It's a difficult question. The ultimate goal is to create analytics upon which the company can

actually act or react to. We're creating these analytics so people can do something with them. How does Teradata support that final step of actually taking them to action?

CT: I think that's a key point. A lot of things we've talked about here are engines, frameworks, and algorithms. At the end of the day, it's about what is the final output? What is the optimized list that goes into on-site search that they know when they run it, they're going to get a better return?

What's the list that says, "Here's the 20 people they're going to churn tomorrow," and what can you do? What's the list of the people in the customer journey that are on step three, and if they end up going to step four and five are going to churn?"

That really is what the face of Aster is all about. Using behavioral analytics is what's likely to happen that can absolutely have a positive impact on a company's business.

CI: That's what you supply, ultimately, is that result set, right? That's the ultimate end goal of all of these analytics.

CT: Absolutely. This changes how companies compete in the marketplace, and how they continue to enhance the customers' experience.

CI: Beautiful. We could probably talk about all that wonderful information for quite a while but unfortunately that's it for this edition of the BBBT Podcast. Again, I'm Claudia Imhoff, and it's been such a pleasure to speak with both Chris Twogood and John Thuma of Teradata today. Thanks to both of you.

CT: Thanks for having us.

JT: Thank you...

CI: I hope you enjoyed today's podcast. You'll find more podcasts from other vendors at our web site www.bbbt.us. If you want to read more about today's session, please search for our hash tag on Twitter. That's #BBBT. And please join me again for another interview. Good bye and good business!