



BBBT Podcast Transcript



About the BBT

The Boulder Business Intelligence Brain Trust, or BBT, 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 BBT provides a variety of services, centered around vendor presentations.

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Vendor:	Jinfony
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Host:	Claudia Imhoff , Founder, BBT
Guest(s):	Dean Yao , Director of Marketing, Leo Zhao , Senior BI Consultant
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Claudia: 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 pleased to introduce my guests today. They are Dean Yao and Leo Zhao. Dean is the director of marketing and Leo is the senior BI consultant for Jinfonet. Welcome to you both.

Dean: Thanks a lot. I love being here, Claudia.

Leo: Thanks.

Claudia: Dean, let's start with you. If you don't mind, give me an overview of the company.

Dean: Our company name is Jinfonet Software. Our primary product is called JReport. We've been around for a while since the late '90s, really focusing on addressing very sophisticated reporting and data visualization needs.

We help our customers embed BI capabilities through JReport into their applications, whether it's an ISV type application, a SaaS, on-premises, or even direct models where we work with Enterprise IT and we embed into one of their internal applications.

Claudia: What is Jinfonet's mission? How do you see your products supporting that mission?

Dean: Our mission is to provide embedded analytics with advanced reporting and visualization for ISVs and Enterprise IT. What that means is we help customers specifically embed analytics, things like reports, dashboards, and BI, with an extra emphasis on advanced



reporting functionality and capabilities with enhancements in visualization.

I mentioned before that ISVs are one of our primary targets in helping them to better build out BI capabilities into their software products, and also with Enterprise IT, whether these are departments of the enterprise or SMB companies.

Claudia: You actually have a pretty straightforward architecture consisting of four components, targets, and sources, and so forth, as well. Tell me a little bit about the architecture.

Dean: The foundation of the architecture is JReport Server. It's actually built on the same code base. The primary foundation is the reporting engine, JReport Server, and we've built a lot of enhancement products on top of that, JDashboard, which is a very streamlined way to build dashboards to drag and drop technology, and also visual analysis.

It's a new way to look at data from different angles without having to step through a different type of wizard, but seeing your data immediately, and then being able to do dynamic interactions with it, changing things like dimensions and measures on the fly. You can see different representations of that data as you work through it.

Now, JReport server is the foundation that enables ad hoc reporting, complex, sophisticated report design, and also the creation of components that you can use in reports and also dashboard designing creation.

Claudia: The other thing that you talked about is the Jinfonet promise, the promise of going from design, to distribute, to discover. Let's talk about that a little bit.

Dean: Our promise is, as you mentioned, design, distribute, and discover.

The first one in design, is that we really want to enable the report designers and report developers, and even application developers to be able to build business intelligence capabilities directly into



their application by embedding it and to be able to help report designers design, not only the look and feel of the components but also the interaction capabilities of reports, of dashboards, and present them as data visualizations to the many different types of end-users that they're empowering with these capabilities.

With distribute, now that you have all of these great visualization, all these great capabilities, how do you get these into the hands of users at scale? We're talking about cloud scale. We enable this type of scale through a lot of our clustering technologies where we're able to cluster out identical instances of JReport Server on either physical or virtual notes.

Clustering is great because not only does it allow for scalability but you can reduce single points of failure. If a node fails, then we have automatic protection software that can bring up a new node to service the workload that was lost on that node. The entire health of the cluster remains the same, and one failure won't bring down the entire cluster.

We love to work at scale. We love to help customers build out very large solutions to be able to service tens, hundreds of thousands of end-users, simultaneously getting their data visualizations or reports all at the same time, and even in different delivery mechanisms scheduling on-demand or bursting technologies.

The third arm of the promise is in discovery. Here's where we talk about the different ways that we can provide advanced visualizations, and very sophisticated, complex report and dashboard development.

Everything from very complex, pixel-perfect, high precision reports, all the way to very interactive types of data visualizations that you see, the very pretty types of charts, tables, crosstabs, graphs, that you can interact with and drill down into.

We're providing all these spectra of ways to be able to consume the data visualizations that are provided by design and distribute, and now through discovery.



Claudia: The reports start as you said with this precision, this incredibly, rigid report. It almost looked like an IRS form. It was so precise, and had to be that way for a number of reasons. There are many reasons a company wants a very rigid, very precise report, and you do that with ease.

What I found interesting is that you go from that rigidity, to this incredibly flexible, beautiful world of visualizations, and dashboards, where I can bring something new in or different in, and change it all the time. I can update it. I think that whole range of capabilities is what makes Jinfonet so very different from its competitors. Would you agree?

Dean: Absolutely, Claudia. The world of compliance still has the hard-core requirements of precision, like you said, of this pixel-perfect type of capability. It's not the sexiest thing in the world but it's still very important in that type of use case. Then all the way up to the visualizations where you're talking about beautiful charts, interactivity. I think the point is that we would be able to work along all ends from one end of the spectrum to the other.

We're a very customer-driven culture type of company, where we'll bend over backwards to work with prospects, and be able to satisfy their requirements, whether it's on one end of the spectrum or another.

We can actually build things on the fly. We can actually build components, new types of charts from scratch. We don't have to leverage any charting library. We can build things from scratch to satisfy these complex, sophisticated requirements.

Claudia: It's really remarkable. Well, Leo, I didn't forget about you. Let's talk about your customers a little bit. I want to know how they're using your product. What are good case studies for your type of product?

Leo: Actually most of our customers try to integrate the JReport into their offerings, and then serve their customer space. Back to the way we deliver this reporting, dash-boarding, visualization frameworks. They



are three different tiers. Some customers needed those pixel-perfect types of delivery, which the report itself is quite complex.

We will need to help them start from beginning until the delivery, make sure they can fully leverage our detail function set to really build up those precise pixel-perfect report deliveries. Also more and more customers start to go to the web. The web delivery actually is the common standards now.

Then how to move from this pixel-perfect report to the rapid delivery but still cover all these foundation use cases. That's another quite a common way so far we deal with our customers.

Basically we will try, from both back end and the front end of the integration pieces, try to give them help. The APIs, interfaces and a different open like a target-type controls allow them try to fully integrate our components, and the functionalities into their existing web frameworks to deliver the full workflows.

Then going to more discovery stage, now people start to ask for more and more self-service. They don't expect they can get every single thing they get from the packaged software, and instead they want to start to get involved about these pieces in the process.

They want to look at data from a couple of different angles. They want to show the visualization from a couple of different ways. That's also we start to investigate the new discovery stage, use our full visualization layers to help them deliver the self-service.

Claudia: The other thing that I heard from you this morning too, is your unflagging support of customers. If they want to go create a complex, very difficult report or set of reports, you are there right by their side. Aren't you?

Leo: That's correct. As Dean does mentioned earlier, it's the whole company culture is a customer driven culture. So basically we also open our door to our clients. Whatever the standard common requirements or even quite special, is more than welcome to tell us what exactly they're looking for.



Basically our support teams will help our customer to fully understand, first, our product capacities and also help them to do those functional analyses to make sure we can try to use a certain process to help them accomplish what they are looking for.

Then in addition, if sometimes the product current capacity cannot cover it, we also do additional steps to help them do the customization of the implementation.

Claudia: All right. You get the last question. You did the demo and you know the product probably better than most people do. I'm going to ask you, what are your favorite features in the reporting and visualization capabilities?

Leo: Basically talk about a reporting or visualization, its common sense that you need to represent a data in different way, so for that manner it's quite common. Then some special things or flavors we have in our product are the different detailed layers that we allow customers to control it.

Even just for the standard table delivery, where we'll enable lots of detail like individual properties, we allow customers to plug in their own logic, own program, the entire precise things to tell us exactly how they want to deliver in details -- lots of conditional stuff, even the logics.

That's the open interface type thing to give customers. Also in the final visualization layer, we make it as much as possible to allow customers to do something like white labeling, fully customized, even a style applying. Try to really allow customers to put our deliveries fully into their entire framework.

Claudia: I'm going to tell you what my two favorite things are, in addition to what you mentioned. First of all it was the clean, concise, simplicity of your interface and your ability to create reports. I thought that was beautiful. The second thing that I really liked was that little Adobe button and that little Excel button because what that meant is that I can take my report that I've created on my screen and



immediately convert it to a PDF or an Excel spreadsheet, and email it off to somebody and I thought that was quite brilliant.

Leo: Yeah, exactly. That's actually part of what we call web control. That's also our open interface concept. When a customer prepares a report, it's not necessary to say they only prepare the visualization.

Actually as a side topic other than the visualization, they can also plug in their own workflows so that the web control you see in the demo actually is a simple presentation, and use an image to represent what exactly we'll get. As soon as a customer clicks on it, we use our built-in JavaScript library to trigger the direct export function for them.

Claudia: Unfortunately, we're out of time. That's it for this edition of the "BBBT" podcast. Again I'm Claudia Imhoff and it's been so much fun to have both of you here, Dean Yao and Leo Zhao of Jinfonet. Thank you both.

Dean: Thanks a lot.

Leo: Thanks a lot.

Claudia: 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!