



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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Host:	Claudia Imhoff , President, BBT
Guest(s):	Dean Yao , Director of Marketing Leo Zhao – Senior Systems Consultant
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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 pleased to introduce my guests today. They are Dean Yao, and Leo Zhao. Dean is the Director of Marketing and Leo is the Technical Consultant for Jinfonet. Welcome to you both.

Leo Zhao: Thank you.

Dean Yao: Thank you.

CI: Let's start off with you, Dean. Jinfonet, an interesting company. You mentioned that it has been self-funded and it is profitable. What else can you tell me about the company?

DY: You're right, yeah, we are self-funded and profitable. We've been around since 1998, for close to 17 years now. We have products that help customers better understand their data, their business data.

We focus on a reporting and business intelligence product called JReport that customers can actually embed into their own applications. There's different types of customers that do this.

We've taken that reporting engine and the foundation of JReport and, over the past few years, evolved that to have more data visualization capabilities, more data analysis capabilities, and even delivery into mobile devices.

CI: Let's dive into this in a little more detail. JReport is an embedded data visualization platform. That's the way you described it to us. What exactly does that mean?

DY: That's a great question. JReport is embedded. What that means is that customers will take the JReport server, and embed it into their own host



applications as well as the front end. They'll embed JReport dashboards and reports, and seamlessly blend it into their own applications so it all looks like one, cohesive application.

Three of the key areas that we really focus in on is high performance, and scalability is one of them. JReport Server can be built out in a cluster type of environment where each node of the cluster runs an identical instance of JReport. There's no sense of master or slave node. We can also build in full-tolerance functionality, scalability, eliminate any single points of failure. Clustering is great for scalability and performance.

In addition to that, we're able to push down specific types of queries to the database, and have the database send back a minimal results set and store it into things like in-memory cubes, which makes it very fast to access this type of data.

Our second big highlight is in self-serviceability. We are building tools with a very low learning curve that really makes it easy for users to create and modify their own dashboards, their own reports, to do their own data analysis. Lastly, we want to make solutions so easy and flexible that anyone can use it.

Reports that can actually mash up data from multiple data sources into the same report component. Also, we have flexibility in customization, in designing the report look and feel, as well as different options of embedding JReport.

CI: Let's look at your customers, then. Who's the target for this? You've got a fascinating set of capabilities. What's your target market?

DY: Our target customers are two types of customers. The first one are OEM customers. Folks that actually embed your report in their products that they would license their customer, or they would embed your report into your SaaS offerings that they would offer to their external subscribers.

The second type of customer base is our direct customers. Folks that would embed us into their own applications for internal use. These could be departments of an enterprise organization or a small/medium-sized



business. Any time they need an internal reporting capability that they don't have in their current applications, they would turn to JReport.

CI: Let's get into the actual solution areas. Why don't you tell me about these? You also went over some very interesting integration options, so I'm going to make it a two-part question. One is, first of all, your solution areas. The second is the integration piece itself.

DY: We have a set of solution areas, the first one being embedded reporting. We have a reporting engine called JReport that you can embed, as I mentioned. We can certainly talk about those. We also have the ability to create lots of beautiful dashboards and reports that you can also embed into the front-end application.

We also are creating solution areas around different types of old and new innovative data sources. You have your traditional relational types of databases, even newer types of databases like big data, whether they're Hadoop or whether they're no-SQL data sources. We're starting to support all of these different types of data sources.

Finally, we have solution areas built around data analysis. One of our newer tools is called Visual Analysis. It lets users explore their data in new, different ways in a very quick and agile way.

CI: Let me talk about that visualization for a second, before we get into more details. I was actually pleasantly surprised with the depth and breadth of the types of visualizations that JReport produces. Can you briefly touch on those for a second?

DY: Visualizations, anything from a lot of different types of charts, tables, interactive cross tabs. Keep in mind; all of our visualizations are interactive. It's not just putting up a chart and consuming it in a static view but being able to drill down into these visualizations. We're even supporting newer types of visualizations like map capabilities.

Drilling down, in a hierarchical fashion, into the maps, perhaps the states and even the counties of a map, if you set it up to be that way. Other types of visualizations we have, animated charts, motion charts, charts that you could actually see the movement of data going across an X/Y plane, and



even real-time charts. A wide range of different options for people to be able to visualize their business data.

CI: Cool stuff. Let's talk about one of your core products, and that's the ad hoc reporting and analysis. If you don't mind, talk about that in a little bit of detail.

DY: Sure. With ad hoc, we really want to put the power of creation into the hands of the users. So no longer do they need to make a request or submit a ticket to a specialized report developer, or report designer to be able to create the visualizations that they want. That's time-consuming, back-and-forth communication.

We want to put the power into the hands of the user so that they can actually create and author reports, dashboards, and even data analysis on their own. That's why we've enabled our customers to enable their users to be able to perform this through ad hoc reporting, ad hoc dashboards, and even ad hoc visual analysis of the data.

CI: Leo, you've been sitting patiently, but it's now your turn. Let me bring you into the conversation. You mentioned that there is a type of progression, if you will, that a user, a business person, can go through moving from one product to the next in the JReport family. If you don't mind, talk about this.

Walk me through some of the features and functions that allow a person to progress, if you will, through these various products.

LZ: Sure. If you look at it like it's a Business user, there are a couple different ways of how they use the reporting. Back two years ago, they may just get email every single day, maybe weekly or even monthly, but what's the report for? Maybe they got a balance sheet, maybe they got a statement, and that's pretty much all about reporting.

After move to newer ages, then they start to get an online views like on demand. At that moment, like I said, reports still need to be pre-defined, and then they can start to view it online. They can try to maybe filter all the data in a certain category, narrow it down a little bit. Still, they will get like a fixed box, a sandbox.



Later one, they start to ask more. They say, "I already got all the ideas you gave to me, but, actually, I want to see a little bit differently." Now they bring the challenge. Either an application team who develops this whole thing needs to take hold this requirement, or, how about the customer tries to do self-service? Let them try to figure out by themselves.

That's why JReport starts from the basic reporting package. We extend ourselves to also get into ad hoc reporting market. We enable this self-service type of ad hoc reporting for our customer, allowing them to drag and drop, slice and dice, and try to customize report by themselves and try to dig out the answers they are looking for.

After that, more customers start to think I have a couple different reports. I get a different idea from an individual report. Now I want to see an overall KPI. That's how we introduce JDashboard, to give them a centralized portal. In the portal, they can leverage all the existing reports. They can leverage the pre-defined vision which the application team already offered to them.

They can also reuse the ad hoc reporting they built before. Even more, in parallel, we gave a new way to look at data coverage analysis. Basically combine everything together into the final portal, and then they will get a final KPI. And, as they can customize it, they can do the visualization layer mesh-up; we try to really deliver something they're looking for.

Cl: What I found interesting, Leo, was the seamlessness between the different products. I can pick up one and run through all of these products using the same datas, using some of the same reports, and so forth and so on, correct?

LZ: That's 100 percent correct, yes.

Cl: Very interesting. Let me go to your customers. I'm going to go back to you, Dean. Let's go over a couple of the customers, if you don't mind, and, Leo, you can jump in if you want to, as well. How are they using JReport?

DY: That's a great question. I'll give a couple examples of how our customers are using our technologies. The first one I want to mention is a company called Vidyo. They're really interesting in that they build a lot of the core



technologies video conferencing technologies, that a lot of the video conferencing companies out there are using.

One recent announcement that they made is that they're now powering Google Hangouts as a video conference technology. The way we've integrated JReport in Vidyo is that Vidyo offers an on-premise software that they license out as well as a SaaS offering. We embedded JReport in both those types of applications provided by Vidyo.

The way they've used it is that users that are using their services can now do a better job in managing and looking at the reports and dashboards produced by Vidyo, and looking at some of the history, some of the statistics involved with video conferencing, the call records, even licensing consumption. A lot of that can be tracked in the JReport reports and dashboards that Vidyo has embedded.

The second really interesting use case is in Bosch. Bosch Healthcare has a product called the Health Buddy Health Management Program. This is a really interesting case of how JReport works with devices.

How this works is that in a clinic or hospital, doctors can issue little devices that allow patients, at their leisure, at home or even traveling, to check their vital statistics, check their blood pressure, check the sugar level in their blood, and report this back, using this device, to Bosch.

Then, the doctors in the hospital or clinics can actually view reports, provided by JReport embedded into Bosch's application, in real-time and be able to offer the patient necessary diagnosis or next steps. It's a really interesting case in the healthcare space there.

One other quick one that I want to mention is in the financial space. That's with Visa. Visa's embedded JReport in several of their projects. The first one is in Visa Small Business. With that group, there's about 15,000 companies running JReport and getting the reports on a daily basis. The other one is with their commercial cardholder accounts.

In that case, there's 1,200 commercial cardholder accounts where each account has about a million cardholders that are getting their reports personalized on a daily basis. These are very large, clustered environments



where JReport is in a scalable environment that scales to the needs of Visa's users.

CI: We got about a minute left. What's the future hold for you?

DY: We've got a lot of exciting things in the future. With JReport, we're looking at always improving and enhancing the visualization. Making visualizations more easy to use and being able to present data in new, innovative ways. We're also digging deeper into ways that people are consuming and authoring their visualizations while on the go on a mobile device.

We support the interaction and viewing of visualizations on a mobile device today, but how do we get them to easily author these on a mobile device? Those are some of the ways that we're pushing forward and letting people be able to quickly make better sense of their business data.

CI: Good. Good stuff. Unfortunately, that's it for this edition of the BBBT Podcast. Again, I'm Claudia Imhoff, and it's been a great pleasure to speak to Dean Yao and Leo Zhao of Jinfonet, the JReport Company today. Thanks so much to both of you.

LZ: Thank you.

DY: Thanks very much for inviting us.

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!