



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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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 Jeff Morris and Gaurav Agarwal. Jeff is the vice president of marketing and Gaurav is the vice president of products for GoodData. Welcome to you both.

Jeff Morris: Thanks very much, Claudia.

Gaurav Agarwal: Thank you.

CI: All right, Jeff. Let me start with you. You were here about a year ago, almost exactly a year ago. GoodData has focused on insights as a service since then. What is that and what are the drivers behind this change?

JM: I don't know that it's so much of a change as a recognition that we're able to deliver success, a successful implementation, and a very fast turnaround for our customers. We wanted to both package that and present it as a much more recognizable vehicle. We're your partnership in not only Cloud-based technology, but also we're your partner in helping you handle and understand what data you're trying to analyze, and help teach you best-practice kinds of exercises while you're performing analysis in the product.

We think that all of these help you understand things going on with your customers, understand things going on within your operations, or even help you build a data product much more effectively and much more quickly than you could have before. That's all because GoodData's Cloud-based platform can indeed deliver this notion of insights as a service.



CI: It was interesting, because you really have focused on a portion of the enterprise, the folks in the enterprise, that is quite interesting. That leads me to my next question, which is to you, Gaurav.

These new expectations of what business intelligence is all about, and the focus that you have is on three, if you will, personas. If you don't mind, why don't we talk a little bit about who they are? The fact that you're not actually focusing on data science or data scientists, I thought that was quite interesting.

GA: What we find is that, with the importance of analytics and the awareness that's being created around it at the executive level, there's more and more pressure to create a data-driven culture.

What that means is that using data to make decisions and drive decisions on a daily basis. That requires agility, and also requires a tool that people can use who may not have the skill sets of data modeling or SQL or predictive analysis.

The expectations are, "Give me something I can use and get results quickly. Give me the agility where I can get to those answers while satisfying the data governance and security concerns that the technical folks have in my department." I think that's the shift.

In terms of data science, I think it's an emerging field. Many of the organizations we talk to, the enterprises, they still don't have the resources. It's a mythical character that exists. They're very expensive. They're still being used more in terms of driving end-product-like decisions, like recommendations, like ad selection, ad-click behavior, rather than in analytical use cases, where you're trying to make a strategic business decision.

CI: So briefly, what are the three personas then that you focus on?

GA: The three personas we focus on is the end-business user, the one who is consuming the data and taking the data to make decisions. He has all the business context.



The second one is the business analyst. He is the one who is iterating on the data, asking the questions of the data, and then presenting the data in a way that is understandable by his audience.

Then lastly, there's IT, whose role is changing, where they can focus more on strategic initiatives that are core to the business: "How do I sell more pants? How do I sell more jeans?" Rather than trying to figure out and solve problems which other best in class peers are already doing.

CI: Jeff, back to you. GoodData has had a pretty good couple of years it sounds like. It seems like the company has finally gotten its traction. It's starting to have some major growth. What do you attribute that growth to?

JM: I think it's a couple of things. One, we focused very, very heavily on areas where we can help organizations the best. We tend to focus on sales and marketing style use cases. Because they have the types of consumers that Gaurav just described, as well as a burgeoning data problem, where there's so many data sources, perhaps in the marketing technology land, combined with understanding your sales pipeline and how to make a business more efficient.

They have a massive data need, and they're usually third or fourth in line in terms of priority with their own IT organizations.

So, they don't have the necessary resources that we could provide. We've got a great market fit for those kind of use cases. We've also focused on Cloud friendly types of industries who are already heavily invested in the Internet, whether they are e-commerce vendors, they could be media companies, they could be travel companies.

These are types of organizations that could be CPG, brand managers, organizations that know where their customers are. They're online and need to understand how best to communicate with them, or how best to understand what their journey is going to be. That's half our business, but then the other half and the other growth driver is what we used to call our lottery tickets: The OEM vendors, the other burgeoning SaaS vendors, those lottery tickets are starting to pay off. We're seeing a heavy



re-investment and growth inside of our powered by community, of course headlined by Zendesk, that are growing very, very effectively. That, too, is helping fuel us

We say that they're making our market. They're identifying their customers downstream or recognizing GoodData within their products. Then they come to us for their internal use cases. I think those are a couple of the core drivers that are really bringing us forward now.

CI: It's been an exciting year, year and a half for you guys.

Gaurav, let me go back to you. The insights engine, there was a statement on one of your slides that GoodData's insights engine leverages the collective learning of millions of interactions by all of your analysts on your Cloud platform.

The whole purpose of this is to provide best practice recommendations, hopefully to improve user productivity, decision making and so forth. What are some of these? How does this work?

GA: Our goal is really to make the more efficient analyst or the more informed analyst much more productive, 20 to 30 times more productive in some instances.

But more important than that is really to make sure that our end users who don't look like the traditional BI analyst, who have skills in SQL and data modeling, but they're the business managers, support managers, marketing managers, sales managers, who need to get insights out of the data, play with the data and get to the answers.

We have hundreds of thousands of users. One of the advantages we have, being a multi-tenant Cloud, is we're able to really see how people use our product, how they actually go about their analysis, what functions do they use, what visualizations do they use.

What we've done in our insights engine is taken all of that interaction with the data and built out an algorithm experience for the end user, which enables them to get to outcomes in one click without knowing how things



need to be built out. More importantly, we help them with, when they should do that.

As an example, you may have a sales manager who's looking at sales for the last four quarters. We prompt the user to go and try to analyze this by period-to-period, so look at it based on last year or the last quarter. We give them the option. In one click he can go to the analysis. In any other tool, that would take him 5 to 10 minutes, if he had the expertise to go do that.

Once he's done that, we'll recommend a forecasting with a confidence level, so that he knows that, "I can trust the data to that extent in how I make my decisions."

If you were to go do that in any other tool out there in the market, that would require a deep-level expertise, but also deep-level expertise in visualization, in analysis, in prediction, in how to use proprietary languages. We simplify all of that, using our engine.

CI: It was quite impressive. We'll get back to it in a moment when we talk about the components there. Jeff, let me go back to you. You gave us several quite good customer examples, a few that certainly caught my interest were unique, different. Why don't you talk about a few of those?

JM: We have a lot, which is really a wonderful situation for us to be in. Some of our favorites right now, we want to, of course, congratulate one of our customers called Raise. What they do is they operate in the gift card marketplace. They just received an award for return-on-investment of their analytic exercises, using GoodData for their sales and marketing use case.

They've experienced and measured an 800 percent ROI or nearly half-a-million-dollar return on their investment in GoodData. We're really, really proud of that accomplishment, but we're seeing that kind of success in a number of vendors.

LogMeIn is a vendor similarly, who is actually up for the same award: 400 percent return-on-investment.



We've seen organizations like Redbubble and SpareFoot, both of whom are e-commerce vendors. Redbubble is an e-commerce vendor that sells art work on t-shirts and posters and what not. They've become an expert in the current artists in the marketplace. They know who the best ones are. They know the ones that need a little bit more practice, let's say. They benchmark those organizations.

SpareFoot is like the Expedia for self-storage units. They know where those units are being booked. What they needed to do and their big epiphany was that, if someone is on their site looking to rent out a storage unit, if they get them on the phone immediately and book not only the unit, but also describe which ones are going to be safe, which ones are going to be most secure, and pick a moving date, then they are much more assured of that actual move-in.

So, when they engage their customer immediately, they saw a 70-percent growth in their own business over the course of last year, but then when you look at some of the other vendors in our powered-by space. I talked earlier about the lottery tickets that are paying off.

Demandbase is a customer of ours who's growing really, really well. They're an account based marketing service that helps you focus your website on addressing your specific target market's or target audience's particular needs. They even have an advertising network that allows you to select when one of those customers is searching for products like mine. They will end up targeting that ad and winning the bid on that particular ad.

Demandbase is actually being used by probably two thirds of the BI and analytic space. I've got a lot of other analytic vendors out there that are actually using GoodData through many of my OEMs.

Another one of our favorites, of course, is ServiceChannel. They've created their own market indexing mechanism in the facility management space, facilities being, of course, your favorite brick and mortar retailers: Apple and Best Buy and Walmart. What they do is they bring together the network of suppliers who are maintaining and servicing those stores at night, when you're not in there.



It's the cleaning service. It's the plumbers and the air-conditioning people who are operating with the facility managers. ServiceChannel has figured out a way to grade the quality and price points of the suppliers, as well as grade the brand management capabilities of the facility or of the store themselves. So of course, Apple gets magnificent scores. Other vendors might not get as much.

Actually, even ServiceChannel knows now, and are becoming this macro level market indexer, they know what retailers are doing well and which ones aren't. They're operating in a half-a-trillion-dollar business. They know which retailers are doing really well based on their maintenance spend.

They're doing many innovations in the areas of Internet of Things, in the areas of adding weather data to their analytics. They've really helped move themselves and actually given us many ideas around how to present to other downstream customers, how we help an organization move up the analytic maturity curve, and how to bring things like what we call data products to market and not only define what the analyses or what the reports or dashboards might be, but actually then how to package all of those exercises back up and sell them and generate revenue from them.

CI: Excellent. Let's return to you, Gaurav. We've got just a minute or two left, unfortunately. I do want to hear a little bit more about the insights engine. There are three components. You've talked a little bit about the analytical designer and what its capabilities are, but you also have data explorer and then a collaboration capability. Briefly, why don't you discuss the three of these?

GA: For us, the big focus from the product perspective is really the business self-service productivity. The way we think about that is the notion of accessing data, analyzing the data, and then sharing the data. The first capability we launched around accessing is a data explorer.

It's a very powerful tool, which gives an analyst, a business user, the ability to self-serve on more data that is available on the agile data warehouse, which is our of storage, which brings in all of the data from different sources.



The second one is the analytical designer. That's around the analyze use case. It's about the iterative nature, asking questions, getting answers, and being able to play with the data and getting to outcomes quickly.

The third one is collaboration. We see this as being inherent in the platform. Capabilities have released our ability to allow end-users to subscribe to emails themselves, which has been a very popular feature. The second one is the ability to share dashboards and reports and metrics with other users and groups, in order to create a more safe environment before you can go and produce, and publish that.

CI: I found that part fascinating. Basically, you build a little sandbox of sorts and let people just figure out what's of value and then promote it to production, if that's the case. Right?

GA: Exactly.

CI: Let's end quickly with a little bit of where you're going with the company.

JM: Let's see, where are we going with the company? We're finding that there's absolutely no shortage of data out there. We love that.

CI: I would agree with that.

JM: Guess where the majority of that data is being born. It's being born in the Cloud. So we're continuing to move in to and advocate use of technologies like GoodData, use of technologies like our partner vendors, to help build out these Cloud data sources, to help build out this insights network that we feel like we are living on top of inside of GoodData.

That could bring together different types of users, actually the data scientists, different types of vendors, perhaps sharing different complementary data together, or bringing together this entire community, perhaps with other templates or other best practices, exercises, to make the proliferation and adoption of good analyses easier and easier and easier for the community at large.

I think we've been demonstrating throughout the course of today that our focus is indeed on that business consumer.



Roman Stenek, our CEO, is starting to talk about the idea of supporting 100% of the user community that we can possibly reach, and recognizing what those challenges might be.

Those challenges aren't necessarily around the analyses. Those challenges are about accessibility. Those challenges are about collaboration, as we just mentioned. You'll see us investing in those areas to really drive overall adoption of systems like ours.

GA: I'll just end with, from a product perspective, I see three different shaders we're going to continue double-down on.

The first is empowering people, everyday people, to make better business decisions faster. The way we do that is build a more usable, easier to use product.

The second is being able to do that at scale. By scale I mean having thousands of users concurrently use a product, scale in terms of data volumes that they can go and analyze, and scale in terms of different analytical work spaces that we can provide.

Lastly, the notion of helping these people with best practices, with recommendations so they cannot fail, and get to outcomes faster. I see us doubling down on those three different shaders, going forward.

CI: 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 such fun to talk with Jeff Morris and Gaurav Agarwal of GoodData today. Thank you both for being with me.

JM: As always, it's a blast.

GA: Thank you for having 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!