

# INVESTORPLACE MEDIA ESCAPES THE QUICKSAND WITH BUSINESSOBJECTS ENTERPRISE



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*Heath Warner, Vice President of Business Intelligence, InvestorPlace Media*



## Industry

Financial Publishing

## Business Process

Marketing, customer service, needs analysis

## Challenge

Inundated with massive volumes of data from multiple sources, InvestorPlace Media was unable to leverage the data effectively for its marketing campaigns.

## Why Business Objects?

With its robust reporting tools and BI expertise, Business Objects transforms the company into a far more efficient marketing organization.

## Business Objects Products and Services

BusinessObjects Enterprise Premium XI

BusinessObjects Data Integrator

BusinessObjects Web Intelligence

Crystal Reports

## CHALLENGE

People work hard their whole lives to build up a nest egg of retirement savings – the key to years of stress-free travel and recreation – and they want to be sure their money is invested wisely. Younger investors, too, are keen to leverage savvy investment advice, particularly in today's busy online trading environment. Helping individuals optimize their portfolios is what InvestorPlace Media is all about, and software from Business Objects, an SAP company, plays a pivotal role in the process.

A publisher of financial advisory services for self-directed investors, InvestorPlace Media has brought market-beating investment advice to the individual investor for more than 30 years. With net annual sales of approximately \$70 million, the company helps investors build wealth in a serious, consistent way through consumer newsletters, email services, Web sites, and



other media platforms. Products include such well-respected publications as Louis Navellier's *Quantum Growth*, Richard Band's *Profitable Investing*, and Robert Hsu's *China Strategy*.

Before InvestorPlace Media implemented its Business Objects solution, the company's business intelligence (BI) staff was overwhelmed with huge volumes of marketing data from disparate sources. Previously, as a direct-mail house, InvestorPlace Media simply tracked whether an end customer

did or did not purchase specific products. But with the advent of email and the Internet, much more sophisticated response metrics became available for market segmentation purposes: Did the customer open the email message? Did he or she click on one or more of the embedded links? Which specific pages were viewed? Did the customer make a purchase?

"We were caught in the quicksand of all this new data," says Heath Warner, vice president of BI at InvestorPlace Media. "We knew the data was important to our business and to the marketing decisions we make, but we couldn't use it effectively until we applied the power of the Business Objects tools. They helped us sift through the data and provide actionable information to our marketing group in a timely manner."

## APPROACH

Warner and his team did their homework. First, they carefully researched the leading BI products on the market, finally choosing BusinessObjects™ Enterprise Premium XI, BusinessObjects Web Intelligence®, Crystal Reports®, and BusinessObjects Data Integrator software – an "easy choice," according to Warner.

The team worked on the underlying data structure, taking several months to make sure everything was right. Implementing the Business Objects solution itself was only a matter of weeks. "It was virtually an overnight success," recalls Warner. "Once we validated the data and

flipped the switch, we cut our normal eight-hour list selection process down to half an hour. That created a lot of buzz in the company.”

BusinessObjects Web Intelligence makes it possible to create easy-to-use universes, empowering high-level marketing executives to mine data directly and answer many of their own questions. Power users take advantage of Crystal Reports to develop sophisticated reporting applications – the product enables a summarized, or snapshot, view for executives, as well as the ability to drill down to the most granular details. BusinessObjects Data Integrator was invaluable in establishing the data mart at the outset of the project. And BusinessObjects Enterprise Premium XI acts as an overall report server at InvestorPlace Media. “It’s been very helpful in creating a more efficient reporting environment for all of our users – not just marketing but also accounting, customer service, and IT,” says Warner. “The efficiency lies in having everything in one place.”

## RESULTS

In addition to improving operational efficiency at InvestorPlace Media, the Business Objects solution makes a big difference to the company’s subscriber base. “With a better understanding of our customers, we are able to target our marketing campaigns much more successfully,” says Warner. “For example, if we know someone has expressed interest in fixed-income investment opportunities, we don’t send them emails about growth-oriented strategies. This has made communicating with our customers a more fruitful experience.”

The partner ecosystem surrounding InvestorPlace Media – including the company’s fulfillment and email marketing vendors – also reaps significant benefits. “It’s taken a lot of pressure off them,” says Warner. “In the past, we looked to them for reporting solutions. We’d get data on marketing campaign success from our e-commerce vendor and we would try to plug it into data we were receiving from our Web-hosting vendor – sort of like assembling a giant jigsaw puzzle in Excel. Now they just send us the data, and we use the Business Object tools to put the jigsaw puzzle together.”

Warner already has a number of new BI projects lined up, and he plans to start with prospecting. “The power of our Business Objects infrastructure allows us to create multiple views of the data with minimal effort, so we can really slice and dice things in order to analyze how leads are performing after they get onto our database,” he says. “We’ve got the wattage that we need from the Business Objects tools. Once we tackle the prospecting requirements, several other key areas of our marketing program are just lying in wait to go through a similar build-out of reporting and analytical tools.”

By making it possible to answer the most complex marketing questions, Business Objects helps unleash the creativity at InvestorPlace Media. All marketing groups can now customize their own reporting and use the data to answer their own questions, and executives have become more proactive about mining the data.

“The Business Objects solution transformed our business by making us a much more efficient marketing organization than we were just a year and a half ago,” says Warner. “It’s really been a boon for us, and it has captured the imagination of the entire company. We are driven by our boundless curiosity – that’s the main trait everyone needs in order to be successful here – and Business Objects makes it possible to answer all the questions we’re asking. Our BI system has become the heart of our operations.”

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