

information management

How Your Business Works

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Vendors We're Watching in 2010

*Amid an abundance of information management opportunities,
some may be the pick of the litter*

By Jim Ericson

There are so many opportunities in information management right now that we're seeing a market of more startups and business models than ever before. That led to our decision to pick 40 to watch, but it's not a bad thing to say there are many more interesting stories than we can document here.

Our choices are based mostly on buzz from customers and analysts, and just like you, we find some sources more trustworthy and even-handed than others. Where their ideas mirrored our findings, we were that much more comfortable.

It was much easier to populate this list than it was to decide what to leave off it. Some hot categories can't be fairly looked at without standalone coverage. How do we address data appliances and the performance gains in Greenplum (soon to be the property of EMC) without mentioning developments at Netezza, ParAccel, Kickfire, Dataupia, etc.? With a couple of exceptions, we also stayed away from high-

performance database software vendors we know are growing rapidly but are better judged by readers on the merits of their unique approaches and use cases. In open source, we touched on a few outfits

Callidus Software:

What: Sales performance management software

Why: A full range of top-line focused applications or the whole suite for a back to work economy. What sales exec isn't into incentive, channel or quota management? Coffee is for closers only

Where: www.callidussoftware.com

for tackling collaboration, ECM and MDM, but we know there's real BI traction growing for Actuate, Jaspersoft and Pentaho.

We noticed emerging areas of commodity services for software and infrastructure management or virtualization or social CRM. Others are adding new dimensions of

visualization or tying external events to forecasting and visualization. We'll buy part of this as expected maturing and concede that other areas still need to prove worthy as categories of products or services.

In one sense, the 40 We're Watching are companies too hot to be acquired – yet. But we also lost likely nominees that brought the right price from enterprise vendors. One of these was Cast Iron Systems, bought by IBM. Jigsaw was another, bought by Salesforce.com, which itself is tricky to track as an entity and a network all at once.

So enjoy our list while knowing it's not exhaustive or complete. The order is random and not categorized. For what it's worth, two vendors give the nation of Denmark a disproportionate 5 percent of the total. With tidbits like that, we prefer to call the 40 a conversation starter based on our own discussions and observations. We know you'll be adding your opinions to our list for next year. In the meantime, share your opinions in our discussion thread at info-mgmt.com/40WeAreWatching.

The List:

Denodo:

What: Data federation/virtualization

Why: In the new data economy, unstructured operational content and data in multiple formats are hot targets for real-time integration and data services

Where: www.denodo.com

Global IDs:

What: Data discovery, verification, mapping, governance

Why: An extendable patent for multidimensional data integration and a common platform to meet those multiple data management headaches businesses all seem to have in common

Where: www.globalids.com

Saba:

What: Strategic people management on demand

Why: It's workforce analytics with more nuance, agile development and usability than others and has a growing list of customers who love it

Where: www.saba.com

Alfresco:

What: Open source ECM

Why: Open source architecture that's easy to build on and is increasingly turning up on the short list of some surprisingly large government agencies and banking institutions

Where: www.alfresco.com

SuccessFactors:

What: They call it business execution SaaS; we call it human resource intervention on demand

Why: Business alignment and people performance to "incite employees to greatness"; Wall Street media is all in with client endorsements for this outfit, so it's no third rail of software spending

Where: www.successfactors.com

Coupa:

What: Cloud-based/hosted procurement software

Why: Old problem, new approach. You're a medium to a large company but don't know details of your top suppliers or what's spent with them. There is a market for procure-to-pay visibility your own IT department is probably years away from building itself

Where: www.coupa.com

Aravo:

What: Supplier information management

Why: It tackles two of the ridiculous black holes

of collaboration, cost and risk management. If you don't know the density of catalog and product integration in extended supply chains, go no further. Cisco strategic investment and GE as a customer makes Aravo almost too big for our list

Where: www.aravo.com

Zoho:

What: Web-based desktop productivity applications and value-added services

Why: When you're talking productivity, you need to be task and mission focused. A loyal community and dedicated upstart to Google that adds unique services and constructively integrates with larger competitors

Where: www.zoho.com

Service-now.com:

What: On-demand IT service management

Why: Modern Web applications call for skilled service providers because no one we know honestly wants to do service management and SLAs for LDAP, testing or partner management themselves

Where: www.service-now.com

Sonian:

What: Cloud-hosted email and document management and analytics

Why: If document lifecycle management and storage sound boring to your execs, e-discovery and criminal or civil liability don't. This job will increasingly fall to service providers who understand it better than you do

Where: www.sonian.com

Expressor Software:

What: Semantic extract/transform/load and integration with a learning engine

Why: ETL may be old news, but integration and data movement never stopped being the heavy lifting of business intelligence as far as we've seen. Plus, metadata is one of our favorite words

Where: www.expressor-software.com

Appirio:

What: New breed cloud systems integrator/app development shop sitting between Salesforce, Google, Amazon and Facebook

Why: On-demand project work highly regarded for cloud enablement; some projects are powerful enough to find their way to general release and are resold with customer's blessing

Where: www.appirio.com

Zettapoint:

What: "Right-tiering" storage database lifecycles and subsystems for SLAs and TCO

Why: Optimizing cost and performance of storage infrastructure offers immediate upside for cost control, continuity, sustainability and regulatory requirements

Where: www.zettapoint.com

Aster Data:

What: Massively parallel, in-database computational analytics

Why: A standout reputation for handling full-bore, non-sampling analytical and transactional processing with common agility and SQL MapReduce for really big data sets

Where: www.asterdata.com

Lyzasoft:

What: Self-service BI meets social networking

Why: Simple but familiar feeling integration, visual interactivity and drilldown, and a well-regarded group experience among users we listened to

Where: www.lyzasoft.com

Nuxeo:

What: Open source ECM

Why: France-based startup is gathering a following and community on a platform that customers praise for useful document and digital asset feature functionality

Where: www.nuxeo.com

Sonamine:

What: Network analysis of link, social and telecom connections

Why: Social CRM is cool, ripe for outsourcing insights such as influence scoring and ready for multiple channels of social, Web, email and more

Where: www.sonamine.com

Radian6:

What: Social media monitoring

Why: For companies that bank on customer opinion, measuring and engaging at an Internet scale is more involved than just listening

Where: www.radian6.com

Space-Time Insight:

What: Space-time awareness and multi-source composite applications

Why: Location, terrain, weather, calendar are

among the risk components that are the unspoken reality of forecasting and planning in every way you'd imagine

Where: www.spacetimeinsight.com

MindTouch:

What: Open-source collaboration and networking

Why: The world needs a well-regarded and functionally strong intranet/knowledge hub collaborative approach you can build on all by yourself, and that isn't SharePoint or Lotus

Where: www.mindtouch.com

Sonoa Systems:

What: API governance, developer management and analytics

Why: API management is more than monitoring and access control: it's the point-of-sale system for a new generation of Web data service trading

Where: www.sonoasystems.com

Birst:

What: Business intelligence and data warehousing as a service

Why: An idea too obvious not to follow upstream in the model of CRM networks like Salesforce and Net-Suite, but tuned for the specialties of BI reporting and performance management

Where: www.birst.com

GoodData:

What: On-demand analytics to mesh with your own enterprise applications

Why: Non-IT-centric shops and their channel partners are learning they're better off not trying this at home when so much expertise is on tap at low cost

Where: www.gooddata.com

Stibo Systems:

What: Product and channel expertise for catalogs through product information management

Why: A Danish company that dates to the 18th century now going global that knows its business and never lost its real-world product and channel expertise for the sake of technology

Where: www.stibo.com

Kapow Technologies:

What: Software or SaaS for database or Web data extraction

Why: If you're not thinking about Web-based integration and ETL, know that Web scrapers and

bots are more grown up and ready for bigger opportunities (Disclosure: *Information Management* is working on a technology partnership project with Kapow Technologies)

Where: www.kapowtech.com

Tableau Software:

What: Browser-based visualization and analytics

Why: Reasonable cost of entry, easy access to most files and databases with drilldown, filtering and intuitive visual dashboards across time, geography and financial info

Where: www.tableausoftware.com

Algebraix Data:

What: High-performance analytic database/warehouse based on data sets rather than tables

Why: A truly different approach with potential benefits of commodity hardware, schema agnostic, fast loading and no performance tuning. It's not inexpensive and the jury is deliberating, but has no reported scale constraints

Where: www.algebraixdata.com

WhereScope:

What: Agile data warehouse development

Why: You pick the database, they speed time to value with prototyping, automation and a life-cycle model that allows for changing BI needs

Where: www.wherescope.com

Syncsort:

What: High-speed processing, sorts and integration of high volume transaction data

Why: Low-profile name with high-profile customers and partners will thrive even more in a complex clickstream world

Where: www.syncsort.com

SwiftKnowledge:

What: Browser-based BI for road warriors for Web server or SaaS

Why: When it comes to BI for the masses, we like simple and straightforward tools that cover the basics well and stay off the corporate network

Where: www.swiftknowledge.com

Mashery:

What: API management, reporting and community tools

Why: A broad mix of customers in media, retail and services that manage file and data flows through private or public interfaces. If you use Netflix, Mashery is how you manage your movie queue

Where: www.mashery.com

Pervasive Software:

What: Data integration and analytics

Why: Software or SaaS data integration to cover every product in the book and a separate parallel dataflow platform for very large data analytic throughput via multi-core processing

Where: www.pervasivesoftware.com

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Platon:

What: Data warehousing, MDM and all-out information management services.

Why: You've got to give this Danish outfit, founded by a few consultants, props for independence and strong opinions on just about everything including their own Tier-1 partners

Where: www.platon.net

Talend:

What: Open source integration and MDM software

Why: We just have to give this company credit for kicking down the proprietary software door in these categories, and because packaged software needs to learn a thing or two about community

Where: www.talend.com

SnapLogic:

What: Data integration for the cloud

Why: In a needful integration world, another opportunity to join networks of influence like Salesforce.com; founded by an Informatica defector and caters to developers, SIs and ISVs who want to monetize their own integration work

Where: www.snaplogic.com

Digital Reef:

What: E-discovery and information governance

Why: A narrow solution for a universal requirement. Nobody has the luxury to ignore the category, so we look for endorsements and watch the category sort itself out

Where: www.digitalreefinc.com

Xangati:

What: Virtualization management

Why: Big and small names in virtualization are duking

it out, and we need more time to sort out the infrastructure management market. Commoditized software delivers what you pay for and optimization is about hard dollars, so we're going to keep listening to the buzz

Where: www.xangati.com

Daptiv:

What: On-demand project management software

Why: Productive projects make managers look great because they are so hard to orchestrate and keep on schedule. We listened to testimonials, but they had us at, "end the spreadsheets and email trails ..."

Where: www.daptiv.com

nCircle:

What: Vulnerability management, compliance/

security visibility

Why: Not knowing what you don't know is dangerous business in a regulated world and only gets scarier as sustainability arrives. Something for everyone's GRC shopping cart, covers all the big fish including payment cards, health care, SarbOx and federal information security