

Attendees: Walter A.

Date: Mar 14, 2014 7:02AM PDT

Title: Interview notes and questions for determining feature set

Questions:

1. History of current content
 - a. Do you know if there are any customer study materials and where you might go to find them?
 - i. Yes I know there are customer study materials. I would find some of them but maybe not all.
 - b. If you are aware of the materials is the current format sufficient or insufficient for your needs?
 - i. I recall one customer study I think Vincent and Scott did and they did a report on it at the SPC. I found the summary report kind of interesting. The Summary report was good. There was also a pretty solid transcription materials which were huge in size, but invaluable if one wanted to go back and check exactly what a customer said. However, very few people have the time to go through the deep materials therefore there has to be a summary for folks to get through things more efficiently.
 - ii. CONCLUSION: Aware of the materials suggests that detailed materials can only be reviewed if the user has sufficient time.
2. Experiencing the content
 - a. How would you like to explore the materials to get the best possible benefit?
 - i. There's different approaches this. There is one of extreme simplification. With half a dozen interviews you could slim this down to say half a dozen bullet points, but there is always the potential for bias. Basically it is difficult to be objective. However, I cannot think of a new approach off the top of my head.
 - b. Do you imagine that some kind of visualization of the findings would be useful/helpful?
 - i. I mean the usage of R is pretty interesting. Also what Scott and Vincent did with bar charts and graphs was pretty interesting. So they also did visualize things and this allowed one to show one slide. I tried to do the same thing with technology analyst data that is create a table with as few words as possible to create a visual.
 - c. Are you familiar with Word/Tag Clouds and key term visualization? If so do you think they would be helpful?
 - i. I guess so. With the obvious caveat. However, if it is several customers then yes. Let's say that the word cloud is build with scanning the terms in 6 or more

customers then that would give me the overall feeling of things. It would be whatever is on the mind of one customer if the sample size was merely one. Therefore if you headed back to that single customer you might get something different.

- d. Are specific organization techniques useful/helpful such as content/key term by geography, time, and vertical/sector? Are there others than those mentioned?
 - i. Should be interesting and I would guess that geo + keyterms would have an impact. So yes it would make sense to combine these variables. Maybe also size of business.
 - e. Do you imagine that you want to get to the content directly or are more summarized abstracts or key term visualizations a better place to start?
 - i. A 3rd party trying to get a glimpse of what this is all about, I would go to the summary first.
 - f. What platform is the best target for such an exploration system?
 - i. I would probably go for a written document that is printed. So when I print stuff I can read it, annotate it. While I see that folks can do this all electronically I'm not used to this model.
 - g. CONCLUSION: Key terms, bar charts, etc. are all interesting approaches to visualization. Yet the challenge is if the population of interviewees is too small key term visualizations may not be a good approach. Also basic to detailed again.
3. Outcomes and consumption practices for the content
- a. What kinds of discoveries and findings do you anticipate are possible or even relevant?
 - i. Well that's a very broad question. I mean the outcome would have something to do with the initial objective of what ever we were trying to find out. The outcome could be the confirmation of what we think trends are. The output could be something very unexpected or new to us. Generally, the outcome could be a trend, pain point, or an increased awareness of conditions in the market. For instance it would let us better understand if we've over or under estimated a trend in the market. I would be surprised to see if we'd find something totally unknown to us. Basically there are a few guys out there like Steve Jobs who can imagine something truly innovative that people don't know they want.
 - b. If so what kind do you think are preferable or relevant?
 - i. I think that the most profound outcome would be if it would really make us change the way we do business. I think that outcome in the past has had an impact in

influencing our strategy, but it hasn't profoundly impacted how we would do business. But that's also probably very naïve or unrealistic as having an individual customer impact our business profoundly is too much churn to tolerate. Therefore we need to synthesize across many customers, etc.

- c. How do you typically use customer study materials in your plans?
 - i. Well the example of talking with the analysts helped me to get a lot more clarity in talking about the problem spaces. This helped my understanding overall in the market and also allowed me to build contacts in the industry. Further I keep going back to the data to reuse it for validations and results. It actually goes two ways because we can share with them some of the great stuff we're working on which is kind of symbiotic. They feed on the data and make it something digestible they can sell in the world.
- d. If you do not how do you consolidate your own information to produce release, plan, other content?
 - i. A lot of the work and customer interactions I have these days I try out specific messaging to see if it works. I have a story that is aligned to the corporate story, but I apply my own twist to see how they react. If they are positive then I continue on, but otherwise I modify things. When I get positive reactions I try to get other folks involved with the messages and I then I hope that this finds its way into our overall corporate materials.

- 4. Are there other kinds of data to include in conjunction with customer study data/materials? If so can you describe the data?
 - a. Yeah I think that market data on a larger scale would be interesting if we could connect with that. Let's say flash we know that Gartner Group has been involved with this market and we could bring in these various abstract data points that could turn into assumptions we make about our product plans. However I struggle how this can be correlated with customer data. For instance I'm going to Austria next week and they haven't yet deployed tiering so they are behind. Whereas other CTOs might want pure software storage control which is very advanced. Basically there are a huge variety out there. Here's a specific story: one time we were doing a customer study and we included PM in the work and they were involved in the whole process. Interestingly when we presented to the PM team they were actually angry with the results because it didn't agree with their agenda. This means that perhaps we selected the wrong customers or there is another conclusion we could get to. I

think revisiting old material from a couple of years ago could be pretty awesome, hey there is this trend we didn't address 5-years ago and we should now.

- b. **CONCLUSION:** Looking into the past may yield new solutions for today's or even future problems.