



Perspectives by:

Mark Smith

CEO & EVP of Research



Pentaho Business Analytics Brings Visual Discovery and More Big Data Support

By Mark Smith | 05/09/2012 | Article Type: VentanaResearch Blog | © 2012 Ventana Research

With the release of [Business Analytics version 4.5](#), Pentaho has expanded its platform and tools to address the needs of business and IT. The product has come a long way since the [version 4 release](#) less than a year ago, which broke ground in ease of use and support for big-data sources. Advancing beyond its roots in business intelligence, Pentaho Business Analytics 4.5 addresses data discovery, data integration and data mining and provides visual discovery and analytics that operate against stores of big data.

New data discovery features in version 4.5 include a group of interactive visualizations for geo-mapping, heat grids, and scatter and bubble charts. These visualizations are starting points for navigating into usually big amounts of data. Significant improvements to data caching have made visual discovery very responsive even when spanning through big data. You can easily navigate into the visualizations through simple selections or interactions on it. I like the way Pentaho has added geographic visualization and location intelligence to business analytics and its ability to add geographic layers from Google to help better understand the context of location. Also, by adding visualizations within tables and reports of business facts and figures, Pentaho makes it easier to pinpoint over- and underperformers. Visual discovery is useful for analysts who are tired of tools that do not provide enough interactive visualization and analytics, including Microsoft Excel.

Pentaho has expanded its support for non-SQL environments such as Apache Cassandra, [DataStax](#) and MongoDB through read and write interfaces for reporting and analytics. In version 4.5 Pentaho [expands its existing support for Hadoop](#). The software can now be more easily deployed across Hadoop clusters, and supports secure Hadoop clusters. Pentaho recently [announced support for MapR](#) and now adds support for Apache, Cloudera and Hortonworks. The Pentaho MapReduce visual designer is easier to use with Pentaho Data Integration (Kettle). Users can visually access and integrate big-data sources and others through Pentaho Data Integration's workflow and rules. This ease of use is essential, as our [benchmark research on big data](#) found that usability has the highest level of importance for evaluating vendors and their products in 69 percent of organizations.

Pentaho also recently [released a new data quality product](#); the consistency and quality of data are even more critical as the volumes and velocity of data increase. Our [recent benchmark research on information management trends](#) found that organizations that utilize data quality software trust their business facts and figures almost 25 percent more than those that do not. Data quality and data integration are two of the key components of information management according to our benchmark, and having them work together for business analytics is critical to improving the data pipeline for analysts. I expect that Pentaho will offer more direct and even virtualized access to big data without having to integrate data from Hadoop and other sources into a relational database for analysis.

Pentaho also licenses its products to other software providers to embed in their own. As part

Of this effort, in version 4.5 it has added more flexibility for partners to add visualizations and data sources through its interface and scripting. Embedding business analytics as part of applications helps broaden use of the technology.

You can freely download the open source and trial versions of Pentaho's products, and the company says it gets a download every 30 seconds. I would like Pentaho to advance further its collaboration and search capabilities to make the analytics more business-driven. I also wish tablet users could access the mobile capabilities in the latest version through a single link from its website.

Pentaho Business Analytics 4.5 brings together support for discovery and navigation of data, and with Pentaho Data Integration and Data Quality addresses the top obstacle we found in our [business analytics benchmark research](#), that two-thirds of the analytics process is spent on data-related tasks. Its expanding support for Hadoop is critical, as our [benchmark on Hadoop and information management](#) found that Hadoop projects require significantly more data integration and visualization than non-Hadoop environments. This new release helps business and IT work together. Users can massage data and perform analysis with an integrated set of products from a single vendor, which our research finds less than one in five organizations do today. If you have not taken a look at Pentaho, investigate this version, as it is a great example of business intelligence growing into business analytics.

Regards,

Mark Smith – CEO & Chief Research Officer

About Ventana Research

Ventana Research is the most authoritative and respected benchmark business technology research and advisory services firm. We provide insight and expert guidance on mainstream and disruptive technologies through a unique set of research-based offerings including benchmark research and technology evaluation assessments, education workshops and our research and advisory services, Ventana OnDemand. Our unparalleled understanding of the role of technology in optimizing business processes and performance and our best practices guidance are rooted in our rigorous research-based benchmarking of people, processes, information and technology across business and IT functions in every industry. This benchmark research plus our market coverage and in-depth knowledge of hundreds of technology providers means we can deliver education and expertise to our clients to increase the value they derive from technology investments while reducing time, cost and risk.

Ventana Research provides the most comprehensive analyst and research coverage in the industry; business and IT professionals worldwide are members of our community and benefit from Ventana Research's insights, as do highly regarded media and association partners around the globe. Our views and analyses are distributed daily through blogs and social media channels including [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Google+](#).

To learn how Ventana Research advances the maturity of organizations' use of information and technology through benchmark research, education and advisory services, visit www.ventanaresearch.com.

Ventana Research Corporate Headquarters

2603 Camino Ramon, Suite 200
San Ramon, CA 94583-9137, USA

info@ventanaresearch.com
(925) 474-0060