RESEARCH NOTE

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ASSESSING THE VALUE OF ROCKET DISCOVER

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THE BOTTOM LINE

As more and more business users need ready access to analytics for faster decision making and business insight, time to insight can be hindered by the challenges of data loading, modeling, and other data preparation activities. In looking at Rocket Discover, Nucleus analysts found that wizard-driven processes and prebuilt frameworks enabled users to reduce data preparation time by 50 to 70 percent while driving faster time to insight, lowering IT cost, and reducing risk.

Rocket Discover is a self-service tool for data preparation, discovery, visualization, and collaboration that empowers business users to develop their own analyses through its intuitive design, guided navigation, and simplified data preparation. Key capabilities of the solution include:

- Integrated data preparation and discovery. Users can easily access data from disparate sources and use joins, filters, cross-calculations and other tools to create a data set that can be used for data visualization and dashboard development. Discover has simplified the data preparation process: while other data preparation solutions may have several dozen operations, data preparation in Discover is simplified down to seven commands: sort/group/sum, filter, join, append, cross tab, normalize (pivot), and calculated fields.
- Data lineage tracking. Users can maintain and assure the origin, accuracy, and consistency of data with "one-click data lineage reveal."
- Ad-hoc reporting capabilities. Users can quickly build reports to support business requirements without IT or database administrator intervention.
- Natural data exploration and "drill anywhere" capabilities. Users can explore data and drill down to view the supporting data in any dashboard or visual presentation.
- Collaboration support. Discover provides team work zones with integrated chat capabilities so users can share dashboards, discuss issues, and track conversations around a particular query or data set.

Rocket Discover connects to a wide range of data sources including social media, relational databases, cloud-based data sources, SQL servers, Microsoft Excel, IBM Cognos TM1, and mainframes including ADABAS, IBM DB2 for z/OS, and VSAM.

KEY BENEFIT AREAS

In analysis of Rocket Discover, Nucleus found the solution delivered benefits not just in terms of productivity but in faster time to insight, lower IT and programming burden, and reduced risk.

INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

Nucleus found that Rocket's approach of integrating data preparation and discovery, as well as its intuitive browser-based interface and intelligent guidance, enabled business users to more rapidly prepare and analyze the data they needed without the extensive training or trial and error needed with other similar tools. Additional, the integrated phase-by-phase training provided by Rocket can help casual or ad-hoc users come up to speed quickly on the particular task at hand. Increases in productivity for Discover users were realized in three primary areas:

- Data preparation. Nucleus found the intelligent guidance and reduced complexity of data preparation could enable users to reduce the time for data preparation by 50 to 70 percent.
- Dashboard and report building. Simplified dashboard preparation accelerated the time to develop dashboards and enabled users that previously would have had to rely on IT or other experts to build them without assistance.
- Data analysis and verification. Drill-down capabilities and data lineage tracking helped users to reduce the time spent on further exploration and verification of data in existing dashboards and reports.

One user said, "*The greatest improvement over existing solutions is its simplified dashboard preparation. The solution allows users to drag and drop visualizations which is a nice touch. Without it only 30 to 40 percent of users can really build their own dashboards*."

FASTER TIME TO INSIGHT

Beyond the user productivity gains driven by Discover's data preparation, dashboard and report building, and data analysis and verification capabilities, Discover's hybrid approach to data retrieval also optimizes performance and provides not just rapid but more predictable response times, driving faster time to insight.

Data latency can be a significant challenge to rapid time to insight, particularly when numerous internal and external data sources are involved in the analysis. Discover provides two modes to query and explore the data: in-memory and live query. In-memory mode is used when data is accessed, loaded, and cached in compressed format for super-

fast user interaction and analysis. Live query mode is used for very large data sets that either exceed the physical memory space or present unacceptable load and reload times.

These capabilities, coupled with the faster data preparation and dashboard building time, drove faster time to insight for business users. Users said:

- *"It's really about the ease of bringing in disparate data to do analysis. Without it they would ultimately spend days waiting before they could analyze and interrogate the data and get answers to their questions."*
- *"This opens up the market so that executives can find the information they need quickly without going to IT."*

LOWER IT AND PROGRAMMING BURDEN

Nucleus has found that 70 percent of IT departments report that they are resource constrained. Historically, business users have had to go to IT or those with database knowledge for data preparation, and go back to IT on an ongoing basis for tactical report requests. With traditional analytics environments, it is not rare for business users to have to wait days or weeks for IT to complete a report request.

Because Discover users can complete their own data preparation and dynamic reports without IT intervention, they can reduce the amount of requests to IT to both bring in and prepare new data sources for analysis and deliver new dashboards and reports.

Companies moving to Discover can also rationalize their data preparation and discovery tool portfolio by moving to one tool, reducing the number of tools IT has to support and manage. Users said:

- *"The usability is key. With Rocket really anyone can take data and create queries without development knowledge."*
- *"With most other tools, even intuitive ones, you still need a development team."*

REDUCED RISK

Rocket Discover's data lineage capabilities enable users to easily track the origin of each data field. This is particularly important as users combine multiple data sources into one combined data set for reporting, and some sources of data may be sensitive or confidential. The one-click lineage tracking capabilities within Discover give organizations greater control over their data and reduce the liability associated with exposing data at different levels or in different models. It can also reduce the auditing and compliance management costs associated with managing, tracking, and reporting the use of sensitive data.

CONCLUSION

As data-driven insights become more and more critical for competitiveness, and companies have access to increasing volumes and types of external and internal data,

bringing it into a usable analytical framework is critical. However, the time and resource constraints of IT and data scientists within many organizations can hinder the ability for users to access data, build meaningful insights, and act on them. Nucleus found that Rocket Discover's approach drove both initial and ongoing value by lowering the learning curve for data preparation and dashboard building, driving faster time to insight and productivity while reducing cost and risk