



CUSTOMER NEEDS AND STRATEGIES

Business Objects Increases Sales Productivity with Mindjet MindManager

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IDC OPINION

During a typical workday, information workers waste too much time and effort moving between email inboxes and other enterprise application user interfaces. As part of the emerging enterprise workplace, IDC has identified the need for interfaces that provide a unified view of and access to all enterprise information and applications for use within the context of specific business tasks and processes. Organizations like Business Objects have discovered the productivity gains that are possible through the use of Mindjet MindManager, which enables information workers to:

- Collaborate more effectively by brainstorming, capturing, organizing, managing, and sharing information using visualization
 - Create and update visual "maps" to quickly prepare for and conduct meetings with greater efficiency and consistency
 - Maintain complete and up-to-date information on a particular topic or company in a single easily modified workplace, with links to other enterprise applications and information repositories as well as public Web sites
 - Gain a week of additional selling time each year by using a visual interface to work and meet more efficiently
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IN THIS STUDY

This IDC study examines a successful implementation of Mindjet MindManager, an information visualization and diagramming software product. Using the example of Business Objects, IDC examines how an innovative and visual user interface can enable a sales force to be more efficient and effective in preparing for and sharing ideas and other information before, during, and after meetings.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

Mindjet

Mindjet is an information visualization software firm founded in 1993 in Germany. Its products include MindManager (X5 and X5 Pro), MindManager Accelerator for Salesforce.com, and MindManager Mobile for Pocket PC. This venture-backed software firm, headquartered in Larkspur, California, has a diverse customer base, including Abbott Labs, Allergan, Astrazeneca, AT&T, BankOne, BASF AG, Bayer AG, BMW, Business Objects, Capgemini, Cisco, Deutsche Bank, DHS, Dow Chemical, Dresdner Bank, FAA, FBI, Ford, Genentech, Goldman Sachs, HP, Intel, Motorola, Nokia, Oracle, Schwab, Siemens, Sun, U.S. Air Force/Army/Navy, Visa, and Westinghouse.

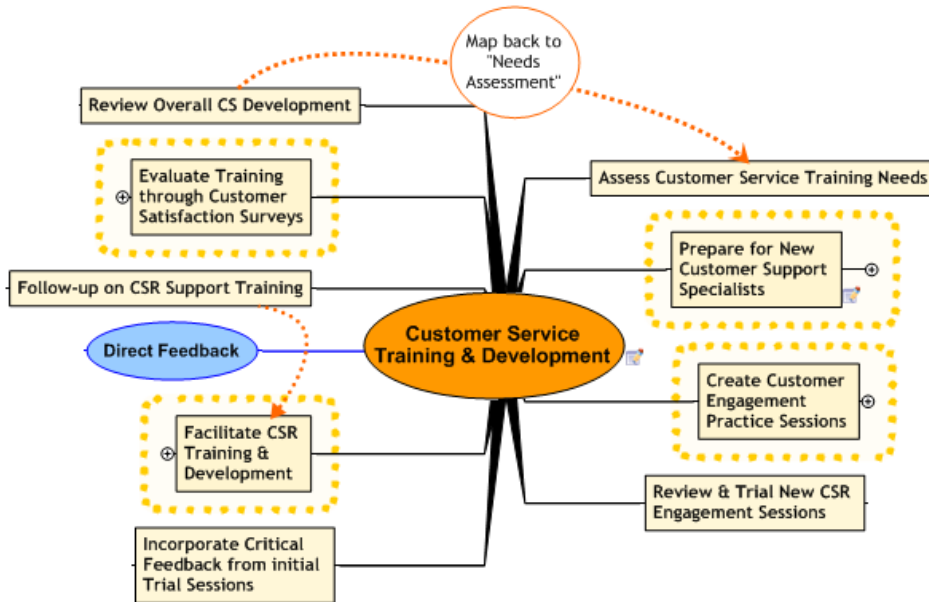
Mindjet's MindManager products help information workers and teams save time and be more productive through the use of rich visualization of information for brainstorming, planning, and sharing ideas and other information in and out of meetings. Complex information can be organized in visual "maps" or diagrams using menu selections and prebuilt parts and templates. Maps can be shared in email attachments or shared folders with other MindManager users. In addition, maps can be exported directly to Microsoft Word and PowerPoint for sharing with people who may not be users of MindManager.

To get users up and running quickly, MindManager includes sample maps for a variety of situations, including product development, Web site development, strategic planning, project planning, business, and customer service training (see Figure 1).

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FIGURE 1

Example of a MindManager Map for Customer Service Training and Development



Source: Mindjet, 2005

Business Objects

Business Objects is a business intelligence software firm founded in 1990. This publicly held company (Nasdaq: BOBJ) is headquartered in San Jose, California, and currently employs 4,900 people. Company revenue in 2003 was \$560.8 million. The company's BusinessObjects XI and Crystal Reports XI software are used by 29,000 companies in over 80 countries and at over 80% of the Fortune 500 firms.

Business Challenge

Before MindManager, the company had no brainstorming and few collaboration products. Besides email, sharing ideas involved saving Microsoft Word files in shared folders or using Microsoft PowerPoint for quickly preparing and delivering presentations. In 2002, Business Objects' VP of sales brought MindManager into the organization to fill this void.

Usage

Approximately 90% of internal sales meetings involving more than 300 of Business Objects' direct sales people use MindManager for planning meetings, organizing discussions, and sharing ideas. MindManager is used for business and territory planning, account strategies, and opportunity mapping. These maps encompass

everything from marketing activities for account managers to dissecting information about individual companies in sales territories. MindManager maps are shared using shared folders, email, and Microsoft Word and PowerPoint files.

For remote meetings, the sales force uses Microsoft Office Live Meeting for showing maps to customers to illustrate their understanding of the company's organization and deployments.

Adoption

Two factors affected the speed of adoption of MindManager at Business Objects in opposite ways. First, adoption was initially slowed by the fact that the idea of brainstorming had not been as accepted culturally in some areas of the workforce. Second, adoption was initially slowed but later accelerated by the fact that people without MindManager were unable to get the full benefit of the maps. The big push to spread licenses across the entire sales force came when account managers were getting maps from others and wanted to do their own map creation and updating.

Costs

Business Objects purchased MindManager software licenses at a discount as a result of the volume purchased. Other related costs include informal training to show new users the basics of how to use the product and the sales template. Depending on the user, this training can take as little as 30 minutes. It typically takes 1–1.5 hours.

Benefits

Saving time is the key benefit of MindManager for the Business Objects sales force. This savings results from MindManager enabling sales teams to work more efficiently before, during, and after meetings.

Before Meetings

MindManager enables the Business Objects sales force to consolidate hundreds of ideas into one central area so the information is accessible at any time. Instead of having to hunt through disparate systems to track down and retrieve information, and then print it out for the file, the information resides in a single place — a MindManager map file. MindManager promotes a standard, consistent yet flexible way for all sales representatives to maintain information about their accounts. Having detailed and up-to-date information at the ready enables sales representatives to provide better service to existing customers and enhance credibility and responsiveness to prospective customers. By reducing the time it takes to collect the needed information on their companies, such as installation base and other corporate information, the sales representatives have more selling time available.

Business Objects uses a customer relationship management (CRM) package to manage information on contacts and opportunities. However, MindManager contains a great deal of customer information that both resides and does not reside in the CRM package. Having customer information in one map saves at least a quarter of the time it would take to hunt information down in the CRM system. When sales representatives are on the phone with customers and prospects, having up-to-date

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company maps enables the sales representatives to quickly access essential information about the company, the contact, and the opportunity far faster than trying to access it using the CRM package or paper notebooks. MindManager users have found, for example, that being able to mention by name key stake holders in the same or different departments or divisions can help create a favorable impression that the sales representatives are knowledgeable and informed.

MindManager also enables sales managers to feel comfortable getting on a sales call after taking just a minute or two to review the opportunities mapped out by the sales representatives. Without MindManager, managers would need to spend 20 minutes to get up to speed without a map.

This type of knowledge that MindManager makes available is not only helpful with customers, it also enables sales managers to better manage their teams and achieve higher employee retention. The best managers are those who form and sustain satisfying relationships with their people. Having a way of remembering and quickly accessing key snippets of professional and personal information about team members can be very useful. For example, MindManager can be used during interactions with team members to ask about recent vacations, anniversaries, and birthdays in ways that can help develop and maintain relationships with team members. This separates good managers from great ones, and great sales managers keep their people and keep them happy.

During Meetings

MindManager enables the Business Objects sales force to create and share a single view of a company or a project, rather than try to get a message across using several pages of a document. This reduces the time needed by a team to absorb the information on which to make decisions and take actions. For example, using MindManager maps to review opportunities during meetings between sales managers and sales representatives saves significant time. With a mind map, sales managers immediately get a sense of sales representatives' accounts. Even assuming that only half of this freed-up time is put to productive use in pursuing new sales opportunities, a savings of 15 minutes per day for 220 work days per year results in more than an extra week (55 hours) of selling time.

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After Meetings

MindManager enables the Business Objects sales force to electronically capture ideas, changes, and decisions in real time. Most importantly, MindManager captures divergent thinking that goes on during meetings. This avoids the arduous and time-consuming process of transcribing meeting notes from paper flip charts or whiteboards to create a recap of what was discussed and decided, and then distributing drafts for review and corrections before a final version can be sent out. With MindManager, complete meeting notes can be entered directly into maps during the meeting so that the notes can be distributed immediately after the meeting for the next steps to be taken without delays.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Business Objects intends to increase the usage of MindManager throughout the sales organization. At the same time, the company plans further integration of MindManager with its ERP, CRM, and other enterprise systems to deliver additional value to its sales force. This need for tighter integration with enterprise systems coincides with Mindjet's plans to provide integration with CRM systems as can be seen in its MindManager Accelerator for Salesforce.com, released in February 2005, which enables users to view and enter Salesforce.com information from within MindManager.

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ESSENTIAL GUIDANCE

To hide the complexity of the computing environment from users, companies should look for products offering user interfaces that can act as front ends to multiple enterprise applications and information repositories. Detaching the user interface from applications recognizes that users should not have to suffer the inefficiencies inherent in mastering and moving between different user interfaces for each application. Interfaces, such as MindManager, that provide information workers with a single interface for viewing and interacting with information from a wide array of applications and information sources will provide key building blocks for the enterprise workplace.

LEARN MORE

Related Research

- ☒ *The Enterprise Workplace: Will It Change the Way We Work?* (IDC #TB20050120, January 2005)
- ☒ *Changing the Face of Enterprise Computing: The Emerging Information Infrastructure* (IDC #30704, January 2004)

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