



Panorama Software and Microsoft

Whitepaper

Microsoft's expanding business intelligence (BI) technology offering promises to extend analytics across the enterprise, but many prospective customers remain hesitant and confused about true capabilities and value. The BI platform – Microsoft SQL Server – continues to be the fastest growing analytical platform, but the Company has always looked to partners to provide front-end BI technology. Through acquisitions and in-house development, Microsoft now looks to provide a complete BI solution. This paper examines its current offering and highlights the benefits of extending Microsoft BI with Panorama NovaView.

Panorama Software and Microsoft

Panorama is the company that sold Microsoft its OLAP technology which became SQL Server Analysis Services. Panorama is also the original company behind the MDX standard. Panorama NovaView is the only business intelligence solution to be designed from the ground up to complement and leverage the immense business value of Microsoft SQL Server UDM / Analysis Services. Panorama NovaView for Microsoft SQL Server offers enterprises one product that spans across all BI requirements: analysis, reporting, dashboards, scorecards, process modeling, advanced data visualization and new innovative Proactive BI capabilities. Using advanced caching and connection pooling for massive scalability on Analysis services, Panorama NovaView is the most integrated and innovative BI solution on the Microsoft platform, with BI delivery options for Microsoft SharePoint, dashboards, Outlook, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Visio, SAP Portal and more.

Overview: BI and Microsoft

Over the past few years Microsoft has been rapidly improving its offering for enterprise business intelligence (BI). Microsoft BI aims to simplify information discovery and analysis, making it possible for decision-makers at all levels of an organization to more easily access, understand, analyze, collaborate, and act on information, anytime and anywhere. Microsoft's data management offerings currently include the SQL Server database product family (including reporting, OLAP, and ETL components), Visual Studio tools (including Visual Studio BI Developer Studio and Visual Studio for Reporting Services), ProClarity, Office Business Scorecard Manager 2005, Office SharePoint, and complementary Microsoft Office products. The vendor is currently in beta-testing of a new BI/Performance Management platform, Office PerformancePoint Server 2007, which has been scheduled for general availability in November 2007. Microsoft Excel and SharePoint are being positioned as the end-user tools for the business intelligence platform.

The foundation of Microsoft BI remains Microsoft SQL Server and its powerful relational database management system, SQL Server Integration Services, SQL Server Analysis Services, SQL Server Reporting Services, and SQL Server Data Mining capabilities. Microsoft's BI offering is built on the scalable and reliable SQL Server platform, proven to support mission-critical environments, and integrated with the Microsoft Visual Studio development platform.

Why Choose Panorama NovaView?

Microsoft has traditionally been a product company and still is. Microsoft is not really selling a BI solution to companies but a wide range of products that can be used for BI purposes. The Microsoft approach brings with it many challenges:

- ▶ Redundancy between the different products (for example Excel and ProClarity are 2 different analysis tools that cannot work in conjunction and have overlap and different features)
- ▶ Requires complex integration between the different product to transform into a coherent solution (for example – need to manually create a report and then manually link to a scorecard. Any change needs to manually be made)
- ▶ Different products do not share the same infrastructure, you can not save in a single place ProClarity views as well as Excel or Excel Services views.
- ▶ Different metadata for different applications. (for example, can not open a ProClarity view in Excel in an interactive mode)
- ▶ Dependency between different versions of different products (requires the latest SharePoint to use with PerformancePoint...)
- ▶ Microsoft is delivering today basic BI 1.0 technology – shipping today the features and functions that are in the market for a long time with very little innovation

Panorama is building today on its Proactive BI vision empowering end users to focus on the relevant, take structured action, and automate the routine. On top of that, NovaView is a single product that requires no integration and provides all the needs of BI in a single product. For this reason, BI deployment is dramatically simplified. In addition, Panorama NovaView has always excelled in usability. NovaView has been selected for the intuitive user experience and power of the application. NovaView focuses on simplifying the user experience by extending the reach of Microsoft Business Intelligence to empower information workers to create their own reports, interact with data, and collaborate in a unique and intuitive way.

Key Panorama NovaView differentiators include:

- ▶ Innovative Proactive BI approach
- ▶ One product, one installation, pre-configured and ready to run.
- ▶ Better information worker usability
- ▶ Better executive dashboard capabilities
- ▶ Greater analytical functionality
- ▶ Product flexibility and versatility
- ▶ Lower total cost of ownership

Innovative Proactive BI approach

Proactive BI consists of three value pillars – enabling users to focus on what is most relevant to the business; taking structured actions; and automating routine. To help information workers focus on what is most relevant to them, Panorama provides new solutions that make insights, key metrics and key performance indicators readily available in smart ways without the need for complex BI

tools. Pervasive in nature, Panorama's newest product, NovaView Spotlight, allows users to embed BI into existing productivity applications such as Microsoft Outlook and Office.

To help decision makers take structured actions and automate business processes, Panorama is working on providing new solutions through its NovaView product, which brings together business intelligence with business processes and workflow engines. This solution will enable users to take action and launch context sensitive processes directly within a report, dashboard or scorecard.

- ▶ Proof point #1: while BI has advanced a lot in the last 30 years from a technology perspective, very little has changed for the end users who still need to search large reports for key insights that really matter. Panorama's latest PBI technologies delivers insights as opposed to reports putting key metrics and data directly to the hands of information workers without having them navigate large and complex reports
- ▶ Proof point #2: While all BI vendors claim to provide actionable BI, not really provide tools that empower information workers to take action directly from within the BI application. Panorama PBI solutions focuses on enabling users to trigger a process or a workflow in a context sensitive way directly from within the BI tool
- ▶ Proof point #3: Organization have many processes running their businesses. Many of those processes still require manual intervention when in fact they could be automated by bringing in new intelligence from BI systems. PBI from Panorama provides those capabilities making NovaView a true "Next Generation" BI solution.

One product for all needs

Panorama NovaView is one product with one installation that provides the best integration across the BI solutions – One product for all customer needs. The Microsoft BI offering remains a set of non-integrated technologies that require custom integration and configuration to achieve product goals. "Gluing" applications together in this fashion increases upfront costs, delays the benefits of the software, and creates a brittle environment that can not be easily adjusted as business requirements change.

- ▶ Proof Point #1: Panorama NovaView is a single, integrated product – Despite claims by Microsoft, their BI offering is a collection of loosely knit technologies. The PerformancePoint application is essentially three different products (ProClarity Analytics Server, Scorecard Manager, and Planning Server) with some initial integration. Panorama NovaView is a completely integrated solution with centralized administration and rapid installation and upgrade capabilities.
- ▶ Proof Point #2: Seamless transition between scorecards, analytics and reporting – To enable "single-click" access to deeper analytical functionality from MS dashboards users must create custom integrations. The added development slows the information access cycle and creates brittle technical environments. Panorama NovaView Scorecards provides a tight integration

with analytics, reporting and visualization. In addition, Panorama Smart Reporting supports one click moves between analysis and reporting within a single interface.

Better Information Worker Usability

Panorama NovaView is more intuitive and provides better end-user usability. Most organizations have diverse user bases and the success of the installed solution requires widespread system usage.

- ▶ Proof Point #1: Flexible choice of user interface – Panorama NovaView extends BI to all decision makers across the enterprise by providing multiple ways to interact with business data; these include Web access, a desktop client, Outlook, PowerPoint, and MS Excel. Microsoft forces users to use the latest version of MS Excel and Web users must have access to a fully deployed MS SharePoint site. In addition, Panorama NovaView is one integrated suite of all BI applications and provides a consistent look and feel between the different client options which promotes a better user experience and reduces training time and costs. Users of Microsoft BI complain about the functional and visual differences between Excel interfaces, Reporting Services, and SharePoint sites.
- ▶ Proof Point #2: WYSIWYG information access – Panorama’s “what you see is what you get” approach provides an interface that is fully drag-and-drop enabled. Unlike Microsoft, all features are easily exposed to end users allowing non-technical business users to access the information they need to make critical business decisions in a timely manner.
- ▶ Proof Point #3: Stronger performance and scalability – Panorama’s web-based infrastructure massively scales to a large number of users inside and outside the firewall. Panorama’s enhanced security, smart data caching, connection pooling, and query optimization enables users to leverage the solution at any time and from anywhere.

Greater Functional Depth and Breadth

Deeper and more intuitive functionality allows enterprises to gain a competitive advantage with faster decision making cycles. Panorama NovaView provides more functional depth to help information workers access actionable data and make the best business decisions.

- ▶ Proof Point #1: Advanced exception handling – Bubble-up exceptions and custom exceptions automatically identify whether discrepancies exist in performance metrics between high level data hierarchies and their contributing branches. Panorama’s unique way of handling exceptions, users receive proactive alerts to data variances or missed targets that occur at the bottom level of hierarchies. Microsoft BI technologies have limited exception reporting.
- ▶ Proof Point #2: Stronger enterprise reporting – Microsoft’s latest BI technologies continue to act as followers in the market and still provides only basic reporting capabilities. The product has limited report layout options, lacks broad data access, and has limited office integration. Panorama NovaView for reporting provides the power of analytics in a reporting environment enabling customers to build production reports as well as “decision support” reports with full

interaction in one product. Panorama's reporting capabilities provide rich analysis functionality including slicing, nesting, grouping, filtering, dynamic parameters, exceptions and bubble up exceptions. In addition, NovaView users can easily format and distribute reports to meet production requirements.

- ▶ Proof Point #3: Easy formula creation for deeper analysis – Business staff and analysts have little patience for learning complex new coding languages to run simple or complex analytics. Panorama NovaView enables simple formula creation and modification allowing users to quickly get to the information they require.
- ▶ Proof Point #4: Offline analytics – NovaView offers unique offline package definition tools, enabling administrators to create off-line packages for subscribers and export them. Users can then proceed to work offline with the packaged data, and upload processed information back into the server when convenient.

Product Flexibility and Versatility

Flexible deployment capabilities of Panorama NovaView extend the value of the system and can deliver a competitive advantage. Providing deep functionality while allowing organizations to customize, extend, and configure the technology is a key Panorama differentiator.

- ▶ Proof Point #1: Flexible packaging – Unlike Microsoft, Panorama NovaView does not require customers to license technology they will not use. Microsoft has a single license component for all PerformancePoint functionality. Panorama NovaView is componentized to allow organizations to start small and scale the solution to meet large enterprise needs.
- ▶ Proof Point #2: Locks customers into a complete Microsoft technology stack – Product dependencies are a key limitation of the Microsoft BI platform. Not only does it require different technologies solely distributed by Microsoft, but it is only compatible with the latest version releases. Unlike Microsoft front-end BI technologies, Panorama provides connectivity to other OLAP sources, a capability that could be relevant in current scenarios or future ones.
- ▶ Proof Point #3: Microsoft BI forces customers to adjust their technical environment – Panorama offers flexible enterprise BI deployment options. That means the program can run as a desktop application, through a Web browser, as part of a portal environment, or in coordination with other 3rd party application. Additionally, organizations do not need to upgrade their entire MS stack to achieve an integrated BI environment.
- ▶ Proof Point #4: Panorama Software provides supreme flexibility to customers – Panorama does everything possible to ensure customers' success. The Company will customize software to meet customer specific needs, provide them with executive-level contacts, provide rapid response to any question, etc.

Lower Total Cost of Ownership

Software application vendors often use the catch phrase “lowest TCO” to differentiate their products. The liberal use of the phrase has desensitized most technology buyers to vendors’ claims, but savvy evaluators understand that choosing a solution goes far beyond looking at apparent ease-of-use and the upfront costs. TCO consists of all costs, direct and indirect, incurred throughout the life cycle of an asset, including acquisition, deployment, operation, and ongoing support.

- ▶ Proof Point #1: Centralized metadata and business logic – NovaView stores all application side data and metadata centrally, allowing tight integration between different BI applications and solutions. Microsoft’s BI environment creates brittle information silos because it is very application-centric. All of the applications (reporting, scorecard, etc.) have separate metadata and require unique configuration and management.
- ▶ Proof Point #2: Integrated administration – One of the major disadvantages of having a series of client and server-side Microsoft BI components (Excel add-in, SharePoint, PerformancePoint, etc.) is the lack of consolidated administrative functionality. Panorama NovaView provides a single managed solution. Users can manage security, views and so forth on the Panorama NovaView server. This even applies to all BI reports and views, weather they are in Excel, SharePoint or reporting services.
- ▶ Proof Point #3: Microsoft has less enterprise BI / CPM expertise – Microsoft has minimal experience working with enterprises on unique requirements and strategic applications like business intelligence. The Company is best at creating software that is “one size fits all” and having customers adjust their operations to meet the technology. Panorama works with hundreds of organizations to help them extract the most value out of BI technology; this includes planning, customization, and integration efforts.
- ▶ Proof Point #4: Speed of implementation – One of the biggest BI challenges today is the building OLAP cubes that are optimized for analysis. Expensive consulting is often required when using most BI solutions today, including Excel. NovaView Business modeler automates and expedites the time it takes to build cubes by defining robust business models. Once Analysis Services cubes are built and the data is checked, the process of building views and reports with NovaView is very fast. It can be measured in weeks or days and not months.

Summary

Empowering a wide array of decision making staff with the ability to access the information they require and easily manipulate data is critical to the success of any BI initiative. Panorama NovaView extends the value of Microsoft SQL Server by delivering advanced yet intuitive analytics to a wider user group, enhancing existing analytic functionality, and improving end-user client performance. Unlike Microsoft, Panorama NovaView provides one product for all BI applications that does not require “glue” to become a usable solution. It provides greater numbers of users unprecedented

access to Microsoft SQL data, as well as the ability to work with and share that information in a way that suits them best – all while delivering the lowest total cost of ownership.

About Panorama

Panorama Software empowers global organizations with the ability to rapidly identify trends, maximize business opportunities and improve corporate performance and results through enterprise business intelligence and Proactive Business Management solutions. Panorama® NovaView™, the company's flagship solution, amplifies the impact of the information worker through a tightly integrated and complete suite of analysis, reporting, scorecard, dashboard and data modeling applications that support the two leading Business Intelligence platforms, SAP (NYSE: SAP) and Microsoft (NASDAQ: MSFT). Panorama NovaView allows end users to freely explore their data using scalable and intuitive applications.

Founded in 1993, Panorama is a leading innovator in Online Analytical Processing (OLAP) and Multidimensional Expressions (MDX). Panorama sold its OLAP technology to Microsoft Corporation in 1996, which was rebranded as SQL Server Analysis Services and integrated into the SQL Server platform. Panorama supports over 1,000 customers worldwide in industries such as financial services, manufacturing, retail, healthcare, telecommunications and life sciences. Panorama has a wide eco-system of partners in 30 countries, and maintains offices throughout North America, EMEA and Asia. More information is available at www.panorama.com.