

Driving Situational Awareness:

Optimizing information visualization to facilitate decisions at the executive level

agility
made possible™



Strategic decision making requires a firm connection between IT and the business

In order for today's executives and organizational leaders to make smart, well-reasoned decisions that influence the strategic direction of the enterprise, it is imperative that they have access to timely, relevant information that accurately measures the pulse of the business and its market, customers and competition. In short, what's needed is "situational awareness"—the ability to quickly understand what forces are affecting business performance and use this information to take swift, decisive action. And as the success of the enterprise is tied more and more closely to the IT services it delivers to both internal and external users, achieving this goal requires IT and the business to be closely synchronized.

This connection is built on a single premise: Key organizational stakeholders need ready access to operational information that forges an understanding of how IT services are impacting the business outcomes for which they are held accountable. In this way, true situational awareness depends on visibility that arms the executive community with the knowledge needed to make proactive decisions—and identify and mitigate emerging risks and issues before they negatively affect the bottom line, customer satisfaction and brand reputation.

However, what many IT and business leaders have come to realize is that visibility—the component most critical to enabling

situational awareness—can actually impede high-level, strategic decision making. Because most executives are never wanting for data—they can, after all, easily turn to any number of sources to monitor business and IT performance—what they need is a means of filtering raw data through a lens specific to their preferences and responsibilities.

This is especially important given the traditional separation between technology and enterprise domains, which often makes it difficult for a business leader to understand the language of IT. For example, while a detailed graphic illustrating the response time of an online music store may speak volumes to a tech-savvy user, a busy executive will likely not have the time or knowledge to interpret the data and understand what it means to the business as whole. But communicate that same data in a way that shows how response time influences downloads per minute, which in turn impacts revenue, and an executive now has actionable information that can be leveraged to prioritize resource allocations and corrective actions.

Therefore, the challenge facing IT and the organizations they support lies in finding a tool that helps executives cut through the overwhelming amount of data they are presented with each day, illustrates the connection between IT services and business outcomes and facilitates effective decision making.

Situational awareness requires information visualization solutions optimized for the executive community

Certainly, the number and sophistication of IT information visualization solutions has increased significantly over the years. And while these tools have proven quite adept at delivering accurate snapshots of the performance of IT services, many have limitations that make them less than ideal for use by a high-level decision maker. Most business intelligence solutions, for example, are insufficient because the sheer amount of effort required to gather, parse, interpret and deliver the data renders it all but irrelevant the second it reaches an executive's hands. As such, an optimal executive reporting solution must deliver real-time insight into the health and performance of the IT services impacting revenue generation, internal productivity and brand value.

But having access to real-time data alone is not enough. To enable situational awareness, the information must also be put in the context of business services and delivered in a consumable manner tailored to the sensibilities and preferences of the executive community. As such, it is critical to communicate IT performance data in the form of intuitive, interactive graphs and dashboards executives can organize, customize and annotate to fit their specific needs and priorities. These capabilities must also be built with collaboration in mind. Executives should have the flexibility to work with IT to refine the scope and format of the data

delivered, and be empowered to share it with their colleagues to promote a cross-functional analysis of a specific business outcome.

Moreover, because busy decision makers are rarely able to spend an extended period of time in front of their PCs, the solution must be optimized for use on today's leading smartphones and tablets—so users can leverage the inherent touch-centric designs of these devices to explore key high-value metrics in detail and act upon them regardless of location.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the solution must be supported by a wealth of high-quality source data. Because executives' decision-making capabilities are only as strong as the information made available to them, the solution should be able to seamlessly integrate with existing IT management tools—and leverage the metrics these resources collect to facilitate a keen understanding of business outcomes. This level of integration will prove instrumental in enabling IT to deliver targeted reporting content to organizational leaders—and solidify its value to the enterprise by demonstrating an understanding of, and willingness to support, strategic business goals.

About the solutions from CA Technologies

Part of the CA Service Assurance portfolio, CA Executive Insight enables IT to quickly and easily provide real-time access to the high-value metrics executives, business managers and knowledge workers need to answer fundamental questions about service performance, track potential risks and make time-sensitive decisions that impact business results.

The solution's key features include:

- **Real-time metrics**—Integration with the CA Application Performance Management solution provides access to a rich source of high-value metrics that deliver real-time visibility into the health and performance of IT services impacting strategic business goals.
- **Interactive dashboards**—Users can personalize the information displayed by selecting, organizing and monitoring real-time business indicators using an interface designed for flexibility, mobility and collaboration.
- **Mobility**—Compatibility with a wide range of mobile devices allows executives and business leaders to connect, explore, share and collaborate anytime, anywhere.

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- **Annotations**—Users can add depth to performance metrics and business indicators via annotations that enhance the clarity and context of information to enable better sharing and collaboration.
- **Centralized and secure data**—A consistent experience across multiple mobile and web platforms ensures users can access dynamic views of information when needed, without forcing IT to relinquish centralized control and security.

The Service Assurance portfolio from CA Technologies uniquely links end-to-end application performance and transaction visibility with a top-to-bottom understanding of the underlying IT infrastructure. It provides the power IT needs to collect and retain data and perform complex analyses in even the largest, most complex environments. The solution also emphasizes usability, repeatable workflows and reporting tailored to the needs of specific stakeholders. And, a flexible, platform-independent architecture easily adapts to rapid change.

In addition to CA Executive Insight, the CA Service Assurance suite features the following key solutions:

- **CA Application Performance Management**—Provides unmatched monitoring of real end-user transactions in physical, virtual, cloud, mobile and mainframe environments, enabling enterprises to proactively identify, prioritize and resolve performance problems before they affect employee productivity and mission-critical, revenue-generating applications.
- **CA Infrastructure Management**—Unifies discovery, fault isolation, root cause analysis, configuration and change management, performance management, traffic analysis, trend analysis and predictive capacity planning to assure the ongoing performance of critical IT services.
- **CA Service Operations Insight**—Models, visualizes and analyzes infrastructure domains, applications and transactions according to the services they support, helping IT pinpoint, prioritize and resolve service problems to minimize risk, improve service quality and optimize operational efficiency.

CA Technologies (NASDAQ: CA) is an IT management software and solutions company with expertise across all IT environments — from mainframe and distributed, to virtual and cloud. CA Technologies manages and secures IT environments and enables customers to deliver more flexible IT services. CA Technologies' innovative products and services provide the insight and control essential for IT organizations to power business agility. The majority of the Global Fortune 500 relies on CA Technologies to manage evolving IT ecosystems.

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