BMC Brings Versatility and Ease of Use to Big Data Analytics with TrueSight Intelligence

Abstract

This impact brief examines BMC's September, 2015 announcement heralding the vendor's entrance into the broader arena of what EMA calls 'advanced IT analytics' (AIA) through a new "digital analytics platform." EMA believes this announcement is significant in a number of ways, ranging from deployment advantages to use-case versatility, to a uniquely well thought-out and well-integrated design.

Event

On September 9, 2015 BMC announced its new analytics platform, TrueSight Intelligence, at BMC Engage in Las Vegas. TrueSight Intelligence is a unique offering keying on what BMC calls "Digital Service Analytics" with potential outreach to a wide variety of stakeholders inside and outside of IT. As the platform evolves, it will include support for IT operations analytics, security and risk analysis, web analytics, sentiment analysis, customer experience analysis and business intelligence. However the immediate focus in September is more squarely in bringing operational data and a finite set of business insights together across a wide variety of event and metric inputs from both BMC and third-party sources. TrueSight Intelligence will become go into beta in October of 2015, and become fully available as a product in Q1, 2016.

TrueSight Intelligence is a cloud-based solution with flexible options for deployment and expanded usage. It complements (but does not require) BMC's TrueSight Operations solution suite. It is also a part of BMC's larger Digital Enterprise Management solutions blueprint, announced on September 9, which provides a transformational context for BMC's entire product and services portfolio.

Market Background

According to EMA research[1] advanced analytics solutions for IT should ideally support many stakeholders and many different use cases. In fact the average respondent expected to support 5 distinct use cases with some seeking as many as 10-13 from a single advanced analytics investment. This makes sense given that bringing multiple sources of data together for common analysis can shed light on interdependencies across traditional use-case boundaries, such as understanding performance issues in the context of change, or business outcomes in context with user experience and transactional performance, or combining asset, compliance, security and availability management in a common, mutually informing mosaic of data. In parallel, EMA research results show that advanced analytics investments are also expected to serve an average of nine stakeholders (four domain-specific, three who are cross-domain or executive, and two who are non-IT such as business executives, marketing and customer experience professionals, or digital service owners. Given this high bar, the concern, not surprisingly, was administrative overhead, time to deployment, and time to value.

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[1] "EMA Research Report: The Many Faces of Advanced Operations Analytics," September, 2014

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TrueSight Intelligence: A Closer Look

TrueSight Intelligence is a big data platform with strong evolutionary strengths and a clear roadmap for broader functionality and use case versatility over the coming months. Its initial focus will include metrics and events from a wide variety of primarily IT sources, although business data such as abandoned transactions and associated business attributes will be included.

In 2015, TrueSight Intelligence will already support a range of stakeholders, such as those in development and DevOps, product managers, data analysts and IT architects, as well as business stakeholders and IT executives. Near-term functionality includes the capability to explore and visualize data with intuitive, full-text search capabilities. Baselines and abnormalities are automatically established, for all metrics including those KPIs prioritized by users. Within a year to a year-and-a-half TrueSight Intelligence will also be able to harvest a broader spectrum of sources including logs, more detailed insights into user and customer experience, and IT service management data such as trouble ticket histories, and CMDB/CMS and other service modeling sources for service interdependencies. TrueSight Intelligence will also be able to assimilate and integrate more business-specific data, as well as sentiment analysis and social IT within the same general timeframe.

The architecture is centered in a big data lake (leveraging Apache Cassandra) and is designed to support streaming data capture (leveraging Apache Storm) for real-time analytics as well as self-learning historical analysis targeting abnormalities and baselines. Over time, analytics will support more advanced pattern analysis, natural language processing and enhanced predictive capabilities. In addition to fully supported integration with TrueSight Intelligence Management, TrueSight Intelligence currently offers API-based integration, as well as collectors for Linux, VMWare, AWS CloudWatch.

TrueSight Intelligence resides in the cloud and is available through self-service trial and registration. While it can support non-BMC environments, it is currently optimized as a complement to BMC TrueSight Operations, which has proven strengths in infrastructure and application analytics, end-user experience, and its own internal analytic capabilities that are product-specific.

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EMA Perspective

It was no coincidence that BMC TrueSight Intelligence was announced on the same day as BMC's broader commitment to what it calls "Digital Enterprise Management." BMC's commitment to the digital enterprise is a carefully thought-out direction aimed at enabling a more unified, business-aligned (and potentially business transformative) direction for IT and relevant business stakeholders. EMA's current research on IT and digital transformation suggest strong positive gains once this alignment can take place—in everything from improved user and customer experience, to more effective financial optimization of IT performance, to more nimble agile and DevOps programs, to improved security and GRC values relevant to both business and IT stakeholders. To achieve these ends, BMC TrueSight Intelligence should provide a critical and pervasive layer of value across the entire BMC portfolio.

What stand out in BMC's TrueSight Intelligence are:

- A well designed, scalable architecture optimized for true multi-use-case values, including strong real-time awareness, as single, integrated source

- SaaS delivery that may become a game changer not only for BMC customers, but for the industry as a whole in elevating the bar for time to value, ease of deployment and ease of administration

- A carefully planned functional progression to expand data sources, analytic capabilities, use cases and role support

It's premature for BMC to declare victory, as TrueSight Intelligence is just about to emerge into beta. Moreover, while the initial functionality is solid and significant, it is the evolution to broader capabilities in the coming year that are most impressive and market distinguishing. Nevertheless, BMC's design point is right on-target with IT needs compared to many of its competitors, who force a whole array of separate analytic tools on their buyers, or else provide data but not the analytic power to use it well, or sometimes target only niche value propositions forcing an unwieldy "best-of-breed" approach to big data analytics for IT and the digital business. BMC's new analytics platform stands out in addressing all of these limitations head on. With its introduction this fall, it will be well worth watching how TrueSight Intelligence begins to catch on, not only with BMC customers, but as a growing force to reckon with in the broader IT analytics market among BMC competitors.

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About EMA

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