

Seven Habits for Designing Highly Effective OLAP Solutions

Norman Comstock, OLAP Solutions Director
Daman Consulting
October 30, 2001

“A new factor, that of rapid change, has come into the world. We have not yet learned how to adjust ourselves to its economic and social consequences.”

Harvard Business Review
October 1932

Market Forces

- The Status Quo is a rut
- Revenue Retention is Paramount
- Cost Saving Measures Are Needed
- The need for quality analytics has never been higher

Into the Light

- OnLine Analytical Processing is now on the short list for custom solutions
- It's embedded in packaged analytic applications
- It's used as a core engine for some CRM solutions.

Analytical Application Trends

- Underlying OLAP engines continue to become more robust in order to meet scalability demands
- The cost of OLAP and complementary presentation software continues to slide as the technology improves
- Web-based presentation is making analytical applications more ubiquitous
- Data mining becoming more mainstream
- Ubiquity of Analytics is forcing integration of BI

Key Questions

- What's the point?
- Are we just looking for answers to mathematical equations?
- Or are we looking for issues we don't yet understand?
- Do we know what questions to ask?

Seven Habits

- Common sense?
- Personal interpretation is key
- Methodology precedes tools
- Principles for tuning your solution effectiveness

Habit 1: Visualize



Habit 1: Visualize

- A Shared Vision
- Understand the business goal
- A Framework for discovery
- True Analysis is Context Sensitive

Habit 2: Design With The End In Mind



Habit 2:

Design With The End In Mind

- Natural Migration of thought
- The importance of perspective
- Survey the constituents
- Adaptive Architecture grants needed personalization

Habit 3: First Things First



Habit 3: First Things First

- What do you tackle first?
- Ease vs. Purpose
- The magic quadrant
- Conforming for consensus

The Management Matrix

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	I Receivables Analysis Gross Margin Analysis Top 10 Customer ID Top 10 Product ID	II Market Share Analysis Demographic Analysis Expense Analysis Balanced Scorecard
Not Important	III Customer Segmentation Pricing Sensitivity	IV Product Penetration Supply Forecasting

Figure 1 – Sample Management Matrix

Habit 4: Focus On The Constituents



Habit 4:

Focus On The Constituents

- Marketing 101 – the four P's
- P5 – Preferences
- Know what to build so they come back

Know Your Consumers

<i>Value-Added Distributor</i>	Builder	Creates custom solutions
	Provider	Develops queries and provides data
	Mentor	Helps indirect consumers learn the tools
<i>Direct Information Consumer</i>	Hunter	Validates a vision
	Miner	Searches for insights
	Planner	Sets new targets
	Forecaster	Projects the future
	Analyst	Seeks the cause
	Tracker	Scans for targets
	Clerk	Generates results for others
<i>Indirect Consumer</i>	User	Uses data but not data access tools
	Skeptic	Does not do data (or so they say)

Habit 5: Listen First Then Execute



Habit 5:

Listen First Then Execute

- Home on the range, or range in the home?
- Measure twice, cut once
- Vocabulary for understanding
- Look for the blueprint

Trivial Pursuit

Millions

RANK	MOVIE TITLES (1900-2001)	DOMESTIC	WORLD	Budget	Return on Investment	
					DOMESTIC	WORLD
1	Titanic (1997)	\$600.80	\$1,835.40	\$200	300%	918%
2	Star Wars: Episode I - The Phantom Menace (1999)	\$431.10	\$922.60	\$115	375%	802%
3	Jurassic Park (1993)	\$357.10	\$920.10	\$63	567%	1,460%
4	Independence Day (1996)	\$306.20	\$811.20	\$75	408%	1,082%
5	Star Wars (1977)	\$461.00	\$798.00	\$11	4,191%	7,255%
124	Waterworld (1995)	\$88.20	\$255.20	\$175	50%	146%
137	Blair Witch Project, The (1999)	\$140.50	\$240.50	\$0	401,428,571%	687,142,857%

Source: *IMDB.com & WorldwideBoxOffice.com*

Habit 6: Collaborate



Habit 6: Collaborate

- Roles and Responsibilities
- Yield to the group
- In search of dependency not acceptance

Habit 7: Review, Analyze, Iterate



Habit 7:

Review, Analyze, Iterate

- Twisting the known, introducing the new
- Atrophy due to complacency
- Periodic checkup
- Continuous improvement

Conclusion

- OLAP Solutions are increasingly considered an integral component to address the analytical needs of business.
- OLAP technologies, skilled people and financial wherewithal are the raw materials necessary to bring solutions to fruition.
- However, these resources must be channeled through thoughtful planning and execution.

Seven Habits

- Habit 1: Visualize
- Habit 2: Design With The End In Mind
- Habit 3: First Things First
- Habit 4: Focus On The Constituents
- Habit 5: Listen First Then Execute
- Habit 6: Collaborate
- Habit 7: Review, Analyze, Iterate

ACCLIMATE

The OLAP Design Methodology for Effective Solutions

Assemble the Team

Conduct FSR Interview

Conduct IS Analyst Interview

Leverage DW infrastructure

Identify OLAP Engine and Presentation Tools

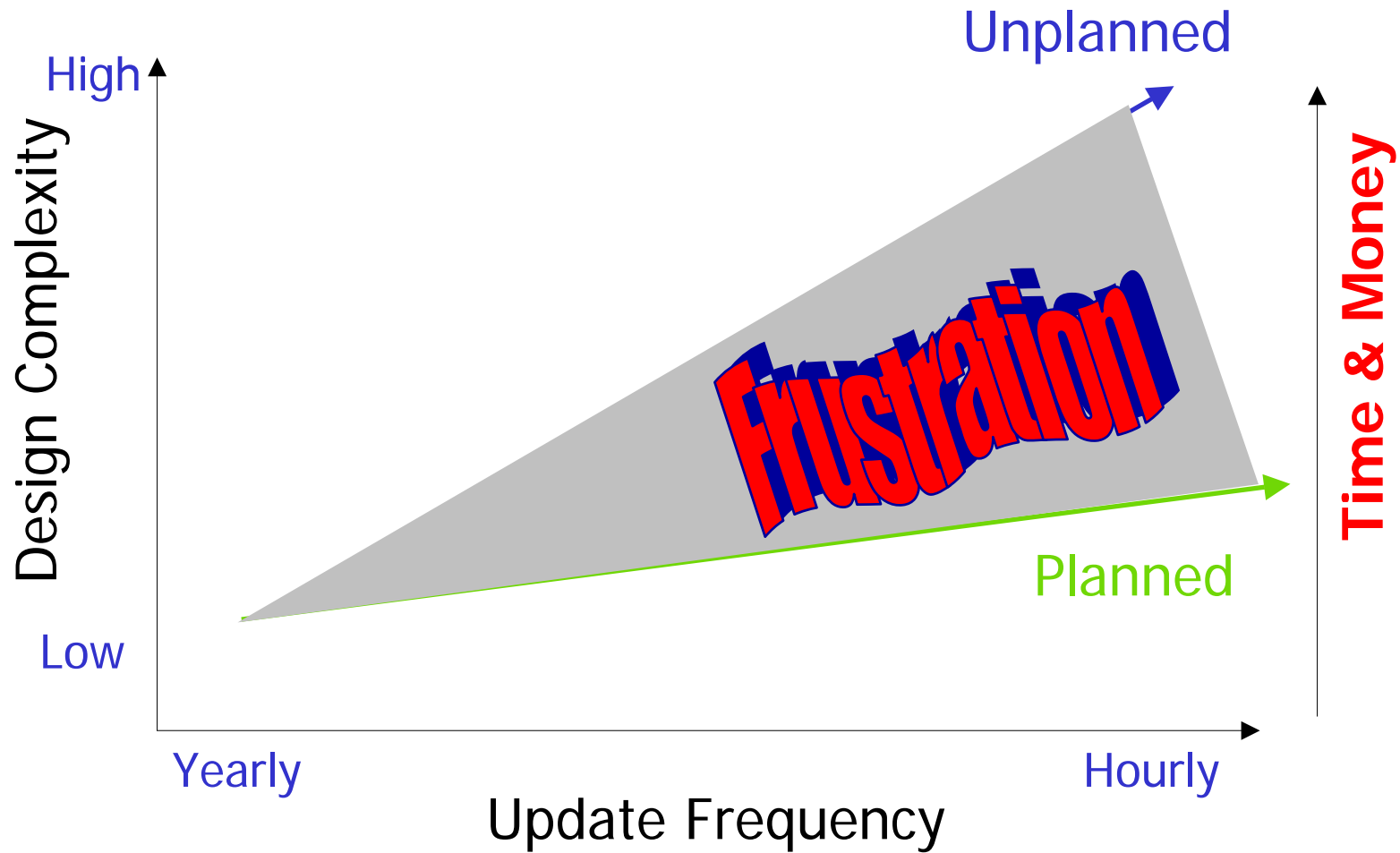
Model Presentation Modes Collaboratively

Amend OLAP Design for Prime Time

Train the Consumers

Exploit the OLAP Solution

Highly Effective OLAP Solutions



The Boot Stopped Here

- Kaufman Footwear est. 1907
- Sold >3Million Boots in 1996, C\$170M
- Concentrated on heavyweight footwear
- 1997 – 1999 were pivotal
- Invested in Warehouse, Mfg, Management and new information systems
- Sold Sorel Brand to Columbia Sportswear- \$8M
- Declared bankruptcy last summer
- Marketing tragedy or management blunder?

Ron DeRuyter, [The Record](#), Kitchener, Ontario.

From United Airlines In-flight Magazine Hemispheres, October 2001

Norman Comstock
Director – OLAP Solutions
ncomstock@damanconsulting.com
281-545-1748