

## Making BI affordable to everyone



In this interview, Sanjay Mehta, [MAIA](#) Intelligence's CEO, talks to Pankaj Maru of CyberMedia News about the significance of [BI](#) across organizations, the capabilities of BI for SMBs, the trend of BI democratization and his company's business. Read on...

**Did the situation such as recession has made organizations alert and compulsive to use and invest in business intelligence (BI) tools for their businesses?**

Yes, the aftereffects of the recession, credit squeeze and shrinking economy has made organizations now more alert than ever before. The pressure being put by the recession on profits of organizations made businesses across growing verticals to look at BI tools and analytics to optimize their business operational efficiency, trim costs.

Following the economic crisis, many business decision makers felt the pain of insufficient, inaccurate or contradictory information, as they tried hard to grow their business. This need, as expected, fueled interest in BI solutions and paved the future way for BI growth.

In fact, despite tough times, a significant number of companies have already equipped users such as managers and customer-facing employees with timely information from a pervasive BI in their organization.

The lessons from the slump have been learnt well and now the focus is going to be on how to put IT to use and what kind of competitive advantage the business can draw from it. And this precisely means that companies would invest more in tools that can help them take the right decisions.

**At large, BI space has been dominated by large enterprises; however, in recent years BI has attracted SMBs. So what kind of capabilities is desired in the BI tools for SMBs?**

Indian companies are now viewing business analytics solutions as a competitive differentiator and a strategic tool in an effort to overcome challenges and increase revenue growth and profitability in troubled economic markets.

SMBs too are like enterprise when it comes to BI, MIS reporting, data analysis and visualization needs of its users. Today, they need BI solutions that can fit their budget with all the features of MIS reporting, data analytics and info visualization capabilities.

In Indian market, most of the SMB organizations have varied applications, resulting in multiple databases. 1KEY MIS Server, a light-weight compact version of full-fledged BI Suite, is capable to interact with multiple applications and provide reporting and analysis on a single screen.

Even Tally users can harness the power of 1KEY BI, as we have connectors that talk to closed databases like Tally and help organizations to review information from different sources.

**There's democratization of BI, touted as the key industry trend during the last few years in context to Indian enterprises. What are your views?**

MAIA Intelligence's vision is to democratize BI and make it available to the masses from a few experts. In fact MAIA's USP is BI for everyone at cost effective price point and affordable BI with Enterprise Licensing policy for unlimited users. 'Near enough is good enough' - is what customers practice today. MAIA Intelligence's 1KEY BI is being used across various enterprises in different verticals for reasons like simplistic, easy to learn and faster rollout.

IT teams at organizations along with business heads are looking for true business value within the investments they make. Now, they do not tend to go for much-hyped brands and restrict to a few expert users.

Today customers are looking for mass customized solutions rather than box packs. In this model of customization, solutions are made and consumed simultaneously. We have been able to deliver the business value out of BI at cost-effective price point with simplicity and faster roll out.

Pricing is often a huge obstacle to enterprise-wide BI deployment. Paying for every user seat – whether it's inside a large organization or when extending BI to your customers or partners through the Internet – it can be a very costly proposition under traditional software licensing models. Our enterprise licensing pricing model completely eliminates that obstacle and has led to more companies implementing enterprise-wide BI and it is well-received by our customers and partners.

**How has been the overall business for MAIA during the last year? What is the flavor of customers' base and which are the key verticals for business growth?**

We have seen a 60 per cent growth in our company's performance in 2010 in comparison to 2009. The enquiries have doubled as compared to the same time last year. We have more than 100+ large enterprise customers and 500+ OEM users across India, Middle East, Africa and Far East. We have single site customers ranging from 1000+ users, or handling 3TB of data volumes.

There are two types of verticalization that are happening in the BI space. One is in terms of function like consolidation and the other is in terms of industry segments. Both are taking place on the established grounds as BI verticalization does not make sense for a few generics.

Financial consolidation is seeing a lot of knitted BI solutions coming its way due to heavy M&A activity and a stricter regulatory environment across organizations and its branches for some common financial binding. Apart, industries like BFSI, pharmaceuticals and telcos that are regulated and follow some standard procedures, look like hot segments for BI. However, others like retail, manufacturing, broking are not being left out by vendors too.

<http://www.ciol.com/News/News/Interviews/Making-BI-affordable-to-everyone/149299/0/>