One of the principal competitive intelligence (CI) functions is to develop quality information sources and provide analysis, but often much of a CI professional’s time is spent juggling information and managing outbound communication. Enterprise weblog technology and quality analysis can provide relevant competitive and market information to the right stakeholders in a timely manner. The result is a high performance, real-time competitive intelligence function that puts information at the fingertips of your stakeholders.

**QUIZ**

What percent of your time is spent doing the following information management tasks?

1) organizing and reorganizing source information
2) querying the sales team for human intelligence
3) constructing and sending a weekly newsletter
4) customizing the newsletter for different audiences
5) digging through your file system for source information to answer specific requests or weekly analysis requirements
6) referencing the source information or attaching it to the analysis

How much of your time is spent doing analysis?

If most of your time is spent on organization and distribution, you are minimizing your ability to focus on analysis deliverables on which a large part of your performance is evaluated.

**THE CHALLENGE**

Technology shortfalls consume time and systematically degrade the valuable knowledge you generate and distribute on a daily basis. Consider the following challenges:

**Organization**

An article written on your industry may reference two competitors, their pricing practices, and forecast market trends. The article is valuable and will be a headline in your weekly newsletter. So you decide to click Save As and are confronted with your filing system (See Figure 1). What now? You choose one folder, or make four copies.

This is a simple example, but it illustrates the limitations of many information taxonomies. Intelligence information must exist in multiple locations, and each location may require separate security permissions to protect sensitive material.

**Analysis**

Analysis doesn’t happen in a vacuum. It requires you to comment on and refer to information from published sources, human intelligence, and competitive profile reports.

- Effective commentary requires that you point out key information that appears deep within a published article or an email from a field representative.
- Synthesis requires that you make conclusions and point to the validating source material. Can you easily call out and comment on information as depicted? (See Figure 2.)

The challenge is to call out key information at the paragraph level and to cope with filing systems where source information may change or move. Your reader wants to find and understand your important points but doesn’t have the time to sift through mountains of text.

**Communication**

Intelligence is shared with the

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**Figure 1: Filing System**
组织在两个积极和被动的基础上。交流智识的行为要求你识别目标受众，生产信息并将其分布给他们：
- 时事通讯包括市场监控更新
- 分析呈送给高管和业务线总监
- 反应性地收集信息，以回答查询

Jane Marin的11月8日《SCIP Online》文章，《收集和内部智识的传播》强调，电子邮件是常用的分发介质。她也指出，企业内部网的使用受到内容管理问题的限制，比如防止过载和限制对某些材料的访问。电子邮件快速而直接，但它对接收者提出了存档的挑战，同时它也不保留信息，以供以后参考。

THE ENTERPRISE WEBLOG

许多解决方案都可用，以搜索已发表信息的大量，并帮助制作竞争性档案和功能比较。但挑战仍然在于有效地管理信息的收集过程，并提供一个工具，以自动地将相关访谈的信息发送给所有参与的人员。

组织的笔记，他们的会议笔记，客户机会（胜出或失败），以及他们转发给系统的电子邮件，成为CI的宝贵来源。

Jordan Frank是Traction Software的营销和业务开发总监。该公司成立于1996年，由In-Q-Tel的智识机构资助。Jordan在搜索、文档扫描和管理以及相关信息管理技术方面拥有丰富的经验。他从达特茅斯学院获得了学士学位，并从麻省理工学院获得了MBA学位。他可以通过jfrank@tractionsoftware.com联系到。

IBM ON WEDNESDAY plans to announce 23 new partner vendors to its program designed to deliver a diverse set of capabilities into its WebSphere Portal Server. 07

Note IBM does not have a weblog partner, but this technology is spreading fast (see MarketResearch7: Flash: Blogging Goes Corporate). The time to move is now. [frank 12/4/02 9:43 pm]

The partnerships with vendors such as Vignette, i2, Information Builders, divine, and Paybox bring a variety of application functions into IBM’s portal offering via portlets.

Figure 2: Comment, Link and Label

Weblogs are easy to write internet or intranet-based journals, organized by time and topic. They put the full power of the web at your fingertips by letting you write to the web on a regular basis with a set of very basic tools.

Over the last year or so, weblogs — blogs for short — have turned from an information-sharing vehicle for techies into a tool with a strong and growing following. Today, more than half a million people use these regularly-updated, online diaries to contribute, link, and control content on an editable web page.

Enterprise weblog software retains the concept of an easy to use web-based journal, but is built for team contribution. It adds corporate must-haves like security, document handling, and an audit trail.

This type of solution helps you to organize and communicate information in the process of collection and analysis functions. The result is a high performance intelligence process and a high quality, real-time product. At a minimum, a weblog solution for CI should allow you to:
- consolidate published information and human intelligence into a private web-based workspace where both appear as an article on a news page rather than a file in a folder
- assign labels and comments to paragraphs to call out key information
- present sensitive or timely material as alerts or alarms
- make links between articles to validate conclusions or relate information
- publish selected articles into individual news pages
- automatically generate customized newsletters sent to all involved in the CI process

A good solution may also support a process for receiving feedback, questions, and intelligence from the field. Taken one final step, this type of resource can also be deployed as a project communication system for account teams and product managers. The notes they take on customer meetings, customer opportunities (won or lost), and emails they forward to the system with product requests become a valuable source for CI and market information.

The weblog may begin as a primarily one-directional resource to enable you to communicate with your stakeholder, but can easily grow into a resource that enables your stakeholder to communicate with you.

Jordan Frank is director of marketing and business development at Traction Software. The company was founded in 1996 and funded by In-Q-Tel, the venture arm of the Central Intelligence Agency. Jordan has worked with search, document imaging and management, and related information management technologies. He earned his BA from Dartmouth and MBA from MIT Sloan. He can be reached at jfrank@tractionsoftware.com.