

REPORT REPRINT

Global IDs continues expansion driven by enterprise-wide information management

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Given the current focus on managing data in Hadoop-based data lakes, it is easy to forget that companies like Global IDs have been offering products to manage data across the entire data estate for many years.

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Global IDs has continued its expansion, driven by ongoing adoption of its Enterprise Information Management Suite, offering data profiling, data quality, data integration and data migration capabilities to enable enterprises to automatically identify the data assets stored across its estate of databases and file systems.

THE 451 TAKE

While Global IDs isn't providing specific details on customer traction, it is clear from the company hiring spurt that it is benefiting from greater focus on information management. This is an area of long-standing expertise for the company, which can also boast significant depth and breadth in its portfolio of products, especially compared with some of the emerging players that are focused primarily on Hadoop-based data lakes. The scale of that product portfolio - roughly 160 applications addressing 30 layers of functionality - has the potential to be daunting, although it is divided into four focused suites targeted at different primary users and use cases. We believe this could be articulated more clearly in the company's positioning, as well as the primary business advantages that are the potential outcomes of using the suites in combination.

CONTEXT

Information management has come back into vogue in recent months, driven in part by the recognition that it is fundamental to enabling enterprises to create Hadoop-based data lakes via which they can land data from multiple sources and make it available to multiple users for multiple purposes. That recognition is tangentially good news for Global IDs, which has been offering products to manage data across the entire data estate, not just Hadoop, since it was founded in 2001 by former IBM executives with track records in master data management and data warehousing.

The company's primary message is simple: in order to gain value from processing and analyzing the data at its disposal, an enterprise first needs to identify and manage the data extant across its estate of databases and file systems. Global IDs enables companies to do this with its Enterprise Information Management suite, which offers multi-layered combination data profiling, data quality, data integration and data migration capabilities.

The company does not disclose a precise number of paying customers - still citing between 20-30 as it was in April 2015 - but notes that engagements are typically large, taking between 6-9 months thanks in part to its partner-led approach that more often than not involves the likes of Capgemini, PwC or Deloitte. Global IDs is clearly in a growth phase, however, with headcount having risen from 85 in April 2015 to about 100 today, and a plan to grow to 150-160 employees by the end of the year.

That growth has been achieved without significant external financing - indeed, Global IDs claims to have been profitable for every year of its existence and to have paid back early investors. The company has discussed the potential for raising debt financing or equity funding in the past with a view to expanding its profile.

External financing still a possibility, with geographic expansion a likely motivator - the company currently generates more than 90% of its business in the US, with a few deals in Europe and South America. However, the company is no rush and will capitalize for growth when it feels the time is right.

PRODUCTS

Global IDs' Enterprise Information Management portfolio consists of about 160 applications that address 30 layers of functionality. While that might sound potentially overwhelming, the technology is actually delivered via four product suites: Data Profiling Suite, Data Quality Suite, Data Integration Suite and Data Migration Suite (fka Data Scientist Suite), which are aimed at different user roles and different primary use cases.

Aimed at enterprise data architects and focused on metadata management, the Data Profiling Suite comprises 12 layers of application functionality addressing data discovery and data profiling. Driven by software agents, the Data Profiling Suite enables users to create a metadata repository of data assets, including those stored in rela-

tional databases, non-relational databases and Hadoop. The Data Profiling Suite automatically provides statistical analysis of all discovered data, as well as mapping business ontologies and creating data models, as well as providing functionality for data lineage and metadata search.

The Data Quality Suite, as its name suggests, is aimed at data quality analysts for the purpose of data quality management. Eight layers of functionality include data quality rules and metrics, data de-duplication, data cleansing, and data governance controls, as well as data quality monitoring and dashboards.

Despite its name, the Data Integration Suite is primarily positioned for master data management (MDM) and MDM architects, with six layers of functionality addressing data movement (via ETL processing), data enrichment, master data matching, data linking, and the creation of key performance indicators and metrics.

The Data Migration Suite has also been referred to as the Data Scientist Suite in the past and is aimed at data scientists, enabling them to auto-generate synthetic data sets for testing and application development and migrate data into Hadoop-based data lakes. Among the four layers of capabilities, there is also functionality for exposing metadata and semantic objects through a REST-based API, as well as analyzing data using the Business Data Analyzer analysis tool, Hierarchy Manager tool or R Workbench.

Together, these enable users to scan their data assets; automatically profiling and resolving data assets to identify critical data elements (CDEs) and critical data objects (CDOs); compute data flows for CDEs, CDOs and applications; measure the quality of data assets; and trace the impact to upstream systems. The ultimate business outcomes are improved data governance, data protection and the potential for rationalization of data assets and databases.

COMPETITION

Global IDs' primary competition comes from information heavyweights including Informatica and IBM, and to a lesser extent Oracle, Microsoft, SAP and SAS Institute. While the company doesn't have the profile comparable with these competitors, its relationships with systems integrators and consulting firms is likely to help it get into projects and accounts and punch above its weight. There is also likely to be some overlap with OpenText, although its definition of enterprise information management leans more heavily on content management and business process management, as well as Magnitude Software, formed by the combination of Noetix and Kalido.

The company is also likely to compete with a variety of specialist vendors with each of its Data Profiling, Data Quality, Data Integration and Data Migration suites. For example, UNIFI Software, Podium Data, Alation, Waterline Data, Tamr and Zaloni are all offering catalog- or inventory-based approaches to data management, with a particular focus on Hadoop-based data lakes. MDM-driven competitors might include Reltio and Orchestra Networks, while data quality specialists include the likes of Qfire, Experian Data Quality and Harte-Hanks' Trillium Software. Data governance-focused specialists include the likes of Ataccama and Collibra

In addition to the industry giants mentioned above, Talend also has interests in data quality and master data management, as well as data integration, while more data integration-focused providers include Hitachi's Pentaho, Diyotta and SnapLogic.

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

Global IDs has long-term expertise in data discovery and data profiling and has expanded the functionality of its suite over the years with metadata management, master data management and data governance.

WEAKNESSES

With roughly 160 applications addressing 30 layers of functionality, the company's product portfolio is potentially overwhelming, although it is logically divided into four focused suites targeted at different primary users.

OPPORTUNITIES

The increased focus on the value of information management is playing to the strengths of Global IDs, particularly as its technology can address the entire data estate, not just Hadoop-based data lakes.

THREATS

The company is competing directly with some sizeable competitors - notably IBM and Informatica - although we believe its relationships with systems integrators and consulting firms is likely to help it punch above its weight.