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US Editorial Offices + 1 415 543 5496

Bureau Chief: Kevin Murphy  
Chief Reporter: Rhonda Ascierio  
Contributors: Tony Baer, Timothy Prickett Morgan, Madan Sheina, Tim Stammers, Patrick Wachter.

European Editorial Offices

Tel: +44 (0) 20 7675 7000  
Bureau Chief: Rik Turner  
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Contributors: Matthew Aslett, Angela Eager, Nick Mayes, Patrick O'Brien, Jason Stamper, Ed Thomas.

Research Director: Kevin White

## Teksouth Preps New BI Accelerator Software

By Madan Sheina

Teksouth Corp is preparing to launch innovative new software called EntelliCache, which the company says accelerates ad hoc queries by a 90% order of magnitude over traditional business intelligence tools.

EntelliCache can be described as a "performance middleware" for BI tools. The EntelliCache Application Server slots in between third-party BI report servers and back-end data warehouses (like Oracle, IBM and Teradata structured in star schema or 3NF) and smaller, operational data caches (like MySQL and SQL Server).

The server uses sophisticated aggregate navigation techniques to tweak schemas and applies specific business rules to redirect and optimize BI queries against aggregated data cached by EntelliCache Application Server.

The system masks the underlying nuances of the source systems -- including its base schema/structures -- which means that users don't have to be aware of existing aggregate structures when issuing ad hoc query requests.

Redundancy, and intelligent partitioning and load balancing are also built into the server for optimal processing. The server's data cache can scale-out of rack gradable hardware and multiple RDBMSs.

"EntelliCache is a very good fit for bumping up operational BI environments that are dominated by many ad hoc queries," said Brad Marshall, director of commercial products at Birmingham, Alabama-based Teksouth.

"All existing ad-hoc and traditional reporting implementations need performance enhancements," Marshall said, pointing to recent industry research that shows that over 55% of BI users are less than fully satisfied with response times of their ad hoc queries.

"What we essentially do is pull data from various stovepiped systems and aggregate them up for performance."

Marshall stressed the intent is not to usurp existing BI investments that companies have made. Rather the aim is to allow BI tools already in place to take advantage of aggregates from a performance standpoint.

"There's great commercial opportunity since we play well with others. EntelliCache looks like any other data source to a BI tools."

The initial release of the software will work with BI servers from Cognos, which is a close technical partner, and Microsoft Reporting Services.  
**contd. overleaf...**

The company is looking to roll out additional support for Business Objects SA and SAS Institute Inc over the next quarter or two. The company also says it is in talks with Teradata, the data warehousing division of NCR Corp.

Marshall is also looking to leverage strategic relationships with global systems integrators like Accenture, CSC and IBM Global Services to extend the market reach of EntelliCache.

Founded some 20-plus years ago, Teksouth is by no means a start-up. But until now the company has focused exclusively on servicing the US federal sector with custom financial management and decision support systems deployed globally. The company employs around 135 staff scattered across 15 locations in the US.

Marshall says the company has learnt from its experiences of implementing these large-scale systems to federal agencies like the Airforce, Department of Defense and Army Reserve to refine its EntelliCache offering.

One of Teksouth's largest projects is the CRIS data warehousing and decision support system which is used to manage the Airforce's massive \$40bn operations and maintenance budget. According to Marshall the system currently supports 14,000 users and handles well over 600,000 ad hoc queries per month.

Teksouth is also implementing a data warehouse with specialized tools for the Army Reserve Command that integrates financial, personnel, manpower, and training data sources.

"We've made our money very quietly in this space over the last 20 years. But we've also learnt from it," Marshall said.

"Three years ago we added EntelliCache capabilities to the CRIS system and got some fabulous response times. Immediately response times were cut in half and the user base and number of queries doubled over the next six months," he added.

Teksouth has now effectively "productized" its success of its federal system implementations. "In essence what we've done is 'turn inwards' to produce commercial software products, the first of which is EntelliCache," Marshall explained.

The company is now gearing up to make some noise in the commercial sector, and will be showcasing EntelliCache to business enterprises for the first time at The Data Warehousing Institute (TDWI) conference in Las Vegas later this month.

The software is priced at around \$15,000 to \$20,000 per CPU. Marshall envisages deals around the \$30,000 to \$40,000 mark.

Teksouth isn't alone in developing software that squeezes greater performance out of traditional BI and data warehousing systems. Vendors like HyperRoll Inc, Kognito (WhiteCross Systems Ltd) and Netezza Corp also share similar ambitions with their respective BI technologies.

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For more information please email [clientservices@computerwire.com](mailto:clientservices@computerwire.com)

**ComputerWire worldwide:**

**London** Charles House, 108-110 Finchley Road, London, NW3 5JJ. Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7675 7000. Fax: +44 (0) 20 7675 7673. Email: [sales@computerwire.com](mailto:sales@computerwire.com)

**New York** 245 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10016. Telephone: +1 (212) 652 5380. Fax +1 (212) 686 2626 Email: [sales@computerwire.com](mailto:sales@computerwire.com)

**San Francisco** 5 Third Street, Suite 520, San Francisco, CA 94103. Telephone: +1 (415) 543 4980. Email: [sales@computerwire.com](mailto:sales@computerwire.com)

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