

## Actuate Enterprise Reporting Application Platform

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By Gary Young

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**Review of:** Enterprise Reporting from Actuate Corporation

**REVIEWER:** Gary Young, director of research and statistics for Bahamas Ministry of Tourism.

**BACKGROUND:** The Ministry of Tourism of the Government of The Bahamas is a government agency dedicated to the growth and improvement of the tourism industry.

**PLATFORMS:** Microsoft Windows Server 2003 (with Actuate iServer), Microsoft SQL Server (database platform).

**PROBLEM SOLVED:** The Bahamas' approach to tourism development had been focused on blanket advertising campaigns to a broad customer base. Indusa Global's task was to assist the Ministry in transforming the island's customer relationship management process. By analyzing data gleaned from immigration cards, the Ministry was able to move from blanket advertising campaigns to targeted ones and beyond to identification of appropriate product action based on a better understanding of visitor profiles, needs and satisfaction. The result was such a success that the decision was made to roll out the information to hoteliers so that these stakeholders could also create targeted marketing campaigns and more satisfying experiences through a superior insight into their customer base. The Actuate Enterprise Reporting Application Platform was an excellent fit for serving business users including analysts, top-level management and the power users.

**PRODUCT FUNCTIONALITY:** Indusa Global selected Actuate's Enterprise Reporting Application Platform as the front end of The Bahamas Tourism reporting solution. This solution tracks and analyzes visitor statistics in order to assist The Bahamas tourism industry in creating a focused marketing approach to advertising. The Bahamas Ministry of Tourism has been able to reduce overall advertising budgets and maximize the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. This application is the first of its kind for the tourism industry. The reports, cubes and dashboards are presented in a customized, highly readable and eye catching drill-down format with bottom line statistics to engage top executives. Users are able to download data into Excel spreadsheets for in-depth analysis and can perform searches and queries on the reports. Actionable information derived from the system was instrumental in improving current practices. For instance, The Bahamas had assumed that most private fliers originated from Florida, making it important for charter flight advertisements. After looking at the reports provided by Indusa, the Ministry realized that much of this market originated in Europe. These European visitors fly to the U.S. commercially and then charter flights in Florida, making Europe the optimal place for targeted advertisements.

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**STRENGTHS:** The intuitive look, feel and ease of use of Indusa's reporting application ensures that hoteliers are able to perform detailed analysis on data without time-consuming and costly training. The ability to report from smaller, more focused cubes allows more effective dissemination of data, generated through e-analysis from the top line report. The application provides a higher level of interactive services to advanced users without overwhelming other users, allowing for 100 percent adoption at all levels within the organization.

**WEAKNESSES:** Actuate does not support the delivery of large-sized analytics cubes.

**SELECTION CRITERIA:** Indusa and The Bahamas reviewed reporting applications from Cognos, MicroStrategy and Business Objects. Actuate was chosen because of the platform's familiar look and feel, tight integration with Excel and high scalability. Actuate replaced a less user-friendly application to expand outside the power users of the Ministry. The biggest advantage, however, was only realized when the Ministry deployed the system to hundreds of hotels. The server licenses offered by Actuate made this deployment possible.

**DELIVERABLES:** The Actuate Enterprise Reporting Application Platform provides user-friendly reports to hundreds of users at hotels, regional tourist boards and the Ministry of Tourism.

**VENDOR SUPPORT:** Indusa Global designed the applications and databases and has provided the consulting and technical support for the application. Actuate personnel, at all levels, have also been very responsive.

**DOCUMENTATION:** The application is Web-based and highly intuitive, making it very simple for new users to get on board. In addition, a comprehensive user manual makes it easy to get started with the application and understand its functionality.

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*Gary Young is director of research and statistics for Bahamas Ministry of Tourism.*