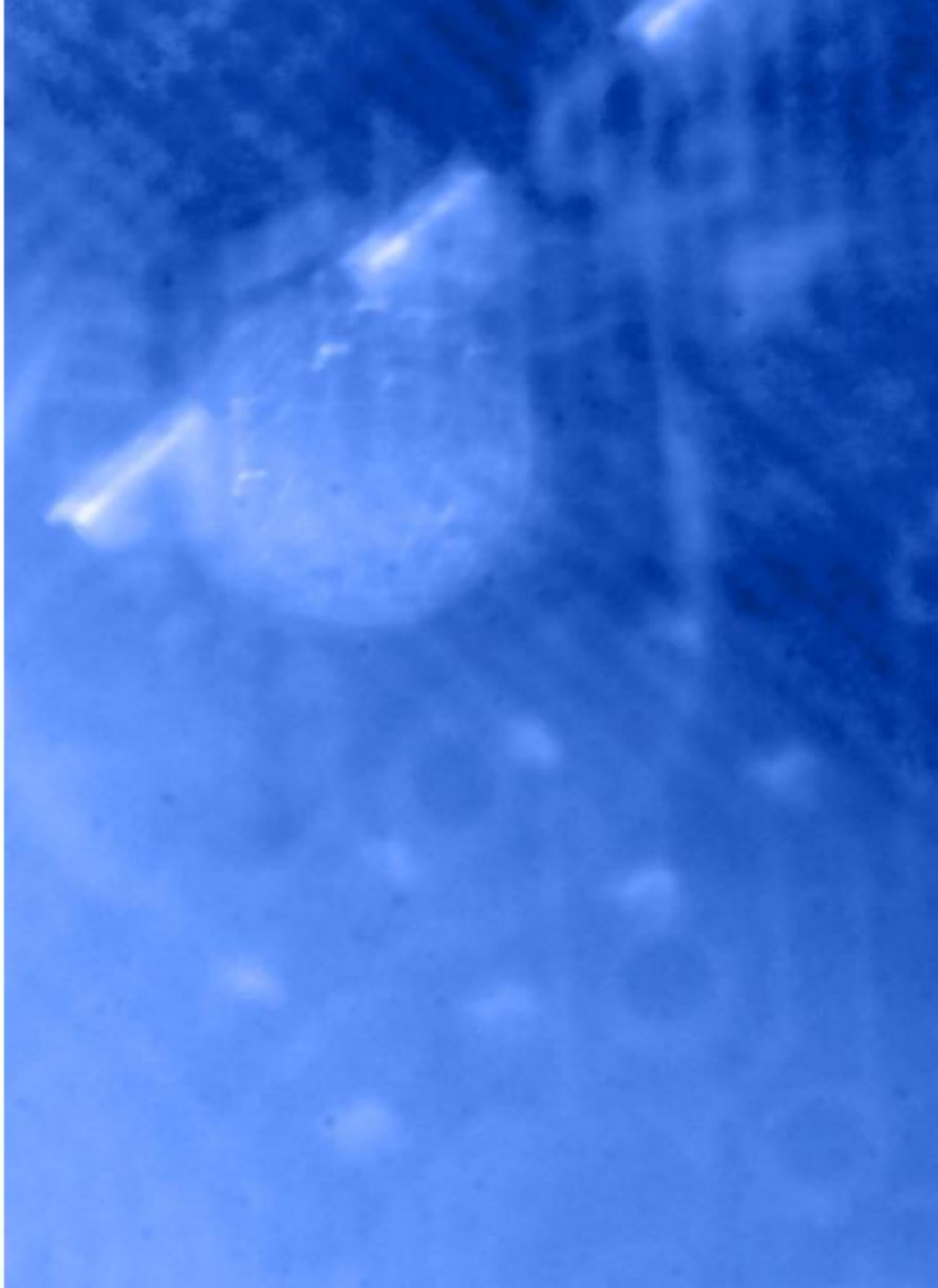
EntreTech Forum Program

Semantic Web - Ripe for Commercialization?

Panel Discussion, Feb. 19, 2008

Introduction & Moderation by Lynda Moulton, Lead Analyst for Enterprise Search

THE GILBANE GROUP



Challenge for Commercializing New Concepts: ADOPTION

- The **Vision** of semantic search is the availability of ***search tools*** that would improve retrieval
- On the Internet this means improving research results by answering questions using natural language: What's wrong with Schilling's shoulder?
- In the enterprise, particularly in vertical domains (life sciences, financial services or telecom) semantic search would aid electronic discovery of leveragable content: better knowledge asset management
- But the **problem** is lack of visualization of the solution: Software: can't be seen
- **Result**: Users who understand the potential are few and even they are in the crawling stages.
- Technology may be advancing but adoption is not
- 4 constituencies need to be involved: Investors, Developers, Markets, Adopters

Investors Need to be Convinced

- Consider early investment in flying machines or space travel
- How do you give investors a taste of the experience?
- How do you expose them enough to give them confidence in the financial outcomes?
- How can you package the vision quickly, and with obvious, easy-to-see benefits to gain that trust and buy-in?

Developers/Entrepreneurs Must Think about and Satisfy Investors

- Be engaged in but focus on applications that pin-point and solve unique problems
- Examples:
  - Lexalytics, Easy-Ask, SemanTx LS
  - Connotate: e-discovery within R&D
  - Metatomix: justice & law; manufacturing
  - TopQuadrant: NASA & defense
  - MuseGlobal: federating search results for understanding
  - Arnold's list: Beyond Search (70 products/24)
- Many-many targeted solutions will give rise to bigger and more generalized solutions for mass marketing and will drive semantic search on the WWW as people are exposed to semantic search options in the workplace.

Markets Must Be Better Understood

- Enterprises are highly complex environments overflowing with failed technology initiatives
- They need to understand the business potential
- This requires insight into how this technology will bring results
- Deploying semantic search requires a willingness to invest in the human resource side of the equation - the care and feeding of the technologies
- Implementation requires administrators of tools and gatekeepers of content who know the knowledge domain and where the answers lie within the domain so they can direct search engines where to go to find the stuff

To Get and Hold Adopters: Solutions Need to Address

- **Virtualization:** It is critical to making accessibility and use seamless - seem like part of my personal workspace, be tightly integrated with everything else in my workspace
- **Transparency:** It is critical to building trust that the resources are all being exposed to me when I search - everything I expect to be there is there
- Solutions must do a better job of aiding adoption - better implementation tools and a better job of presenting query results

Now we need to hear from those who are engaged as investors, developers, and users to learn more about the viability, opportunities, and realities in this marketplace

Panelist: Adam Jackson, Senior Partner, Argo Global Capital

- Two and a half years with focus on investment opportunities in the Web and Wireless space
- Worked at the Telos/Xacta Corporation developing browser based security solutions for the US Government.
- Principal interest is focused on investing in early stage web companies exhibiting high growth potential and significant barriers to entry
- Serves as a director on the board of WorkshopLive, Inc., the world's leading online provider of music education, and Knewco Inc., a provider of semantic web solutions to the life sciences.
- Graduate of Bentley College, having received a BS in Finance with a minor in Information Technology and Psychology.

Panelist: Stephen Walsh, VP of Sales and Marketing, EasyAsk

- Vice President at EasyAsk, a division of Progress Software, oversees sales and marketing strategy and execution
- Served as General Manager, Americas, for enterprise software vendor Enlight Inc., where he developed and executed the company's direct and OEM sales and marketing strategy before it was acquired in 2007 by German software vendor, Datango
- Has held senior sales and marketing positions at Fast Search & Transfer (an enterprise search firm) x.hlp, an enterprise software vendor, RM plc, Europe's largest supplier of technology to education, and 3M
- Oversaw the launch of two European firm's US operations and the management of the global launch for two enterprise software platforms
- Holds a BS in Managerial and Administrative Studies from the Aston University Business School, UK, and a Post Graduate Diploma in Marketing from the Chartered Institute of Marketing, UK.

Panelist: Jeff Catlin, CEO,Lexalytics

- Founder of Lexalytics with over 15 years of experience: search, classification and text analytics products and services
- Technical and senior management positions in a variety of companies including Thomson Financial and Sovereign Hill Software
- Early days of the Internet: worked on the development and scaling of the Infoseek search platform
- He was General Manager for the unstructured data group of LightSpeed Software
- He was co-owner of PleasantStreet Technologies, which produced a news-filtering product; sold to Chiliad Publishing 2001
- Graduated from UMass Amherst, Electrical Engineering in 1987, and then worked on the GPS navigation system during its development phase.

Panelist: Brandy King, Information Specialist, Children's Hospital

- Information Specialist, Center on Media and Child Health, Children's Hospital Boston
- Graduate of Smith College and Simmons College (MLIS)
- An active member of SLA, a professional association of specialized librarians and information technologists, receiving the 2005 SLA Innovation in Technology Award for the creation of a customized media effects ontology used for semantic searching
- Co-author of the forthcoming book *Finding the Concept, Not Just the Word: A Librarian's Guide to Ontologies and Semantics*, due out Summer 2008
- She is responsible for creating the first free, online database of scientific research about the effects of entertainment media on children's physical, social and emotional health, with content from 11 academic disciplines, semantically indexed, and made available to answer questions through a natural language search.

Panelists

Beginning with Adam, I'd like each panelist to share his or her involvement in the semantic search marketplace with any observations you may have about where all of this is going. Then I will ask each of the panelists, including our keynote speakers a question and we will open it up for audience questions.

ADAM

Are you aware of anything that is currently in the pipeline and being funded related to search or semantic search;how far along do you think the investment community is in this area?

STEVE

Are there semantic search applications commercialized and succeeding in the marketplace that you have seen emerging but not yet widely known?

BRANDY

You are on the front lines of deployment. Are there issues such as standardization, and the creation and maintenance of ontologies that you struggle with and what is that hands-on experience like?

JEFF

What can we expect the evolution to look like from the short term to the long term for semantic search in the Web arena based on what you have already been asked to support with Lexalytics products?

MITCH

Are there technical barriers such as enabling technologies or do you think poor execution is the reason for slow commercialization? Where do you look for solutions to get better adoption?

KEN

Is there a better way to position the *Semantic Web* or should we even be using that term? Should we continue slipping the technology into the market in kind of a stealth mode, where it is appropriate?

ANYONE

Can we or how can we differentiate semantically-base searching vs. other search technologies? Do we need to?