



HURWITZ BALANCEDVIEW

THE HURWITZ TREND WATCH

REPRINT

Hurwitz Group, Inc.

T 508 872 3344

F 508 872 3355

www.hurwitz.com

MONITORING DATA WAREHOUSE USAGE

At the recent conference of The Data Warehouse Institute in Atlanta, [Ambeo] announced Activity Tracker, which is a real-time activity monitor with playback capability for the data collected by Usage Tracker, an established [Ambeo] product. Once a data warehouse is built, Usage Tracker can monitor its usage and collect detailed data that can be analyzed to optimize warehouse performance and content. With Activity Tracker, you see usage information displayed graphically as it occurs, instead of generating reports after the fact with Usage Tracker. A non-intrusive “trap” between Activity Tracker and the databases it monitors delivers up-to-the-second data.

A help desk employee is a good example of an Activity Tracker user. For instance, an analytic user might call the help desk and report: “I submitted a query an hour ago, and I’m still waiting for a response.” The help desk person can use Activity Tracker to quickly identify the query in question, see how long it has run, examine its query language, and see a context for it, such as the load on the server.

THE HURWITZ TAKE

Usage Tracker has become the tool of choice for many data warehouse consulting practices because it helps quantify contractual requirements such as design voracity, user acceptance, scalability, throughput, and robustness at peak times. The fact that Usage Tracker is now resold by SAS Institute and BMC corroborates its importance. IT professionals typically apply Usage Tracker to tasks such as identifying dormant data, heavily accessed data, and performance bottlenecks. However, it also provides a better understanding of user requirements by recording their behavior, and the data it collects can be applied to cost justification, capacity planning, and charge-back accounting.

Usage Tracker, already established as best-of-breed for strategic warehouse planning, is now complemented by Activity Tracker, which focuses on real-time data monitoring for tactical management of individual queries. Hurwitz Group recommends that consulting groups, system integrators, and IT organizations put these Ambeo products at the top of their evaluation lists when seeking tools for monitoring data warehouse usage. ♦

Monitoring Data Warehouse Usage is a reprint from the May 10, 1999 edition of
The Hurwitz Trend Watch, written for the Hurwitz BalancedView
Data Warehousing and Business Intelligence Service.

Published by Hurwitz Group, Inc.,
111 Speen Street, Framingham, MA 01701
Phone: 508-872-3344 Fax: 508-872-3355
Web site: <http://www.hurwitz.com>

Authored by:
Philip Russom, Director,
Data Warehousing and Business Intelligence Service
prussom@hurwitz.com

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