

Nominee: Advantage Engine® by Xtravirt

Nomination title: Advantage Engine® - delivering targeted business intelligence

Advantage Engine® is a sophisticated business intelligence platform, designed and developed by Xtravirt, providing versatile Big Data analytics and reporting for software-defined data centres.,

The software platform is a modular, highly extensible infrastructure which unifies and harmonises unstructured data, enabling organisations to gain a cohesive insight to their IT investment in a way that is not readily available in the market.

Advantage Engine was developed to support the needs of our customers' software-defined data centres. It consists of a powerful portable application which can collect asset, configuration, utilisation, and performance data, from disparate systems and platforms via its multi-adapter architecture. This makes it unique from other monitoring and management tools within the market which focus on a single technology, or operational tools which concentrate on monitoring and support for system administrators.

Advantage Engine focuses on the reporting of IT environments to enable more accurate decision making for technical and management stakeholders. It offers solutions to a large number of use cases including:

- Auditing
- Compliance
- Health checks
- Configuration and performance management
- Automated system documentation
- Baselining and current state assessment
- Data and event correlation
- Root cause analysis
- Transformational readiness and discovery

Xtravirt has written software for some of the world's largest businesses, since its inception in 2005. The market is highly dynamic and we recognised that the best way to approach the challenge of unifying intelligence from evolving software-defined data centres was to focus on connecting and analysing any infrastructure from any vendor, whether an IaaS/DaaS platform, operating system or appliance. Xtravirt has a pedigree in taking the experience

gained through designing and delivering countless leading edge transformation programmes and improving efficiency through automation of manual tasks.

Advantage Engine is delivered as-a-service in conjunction with Xtravirt's service portfolio to enhance the depth and efficiency of our professional services around cloud, workspace and data centre. It enables us to assure and augment our methodologies, experience, and skills with rapid automation and capturing of business intelligence. The reduced project timeframes and costs result in tangible competitive benefits such as a faster ROI for the customer, and more accurately informed decision making.

Additionally, Xtravirt has introduced a range of analytics and reporting services that are powered by Advantage Engine. These address a range of organisations' use cases, for example: documenting existing virtual infrastructures, assessing transformational readiness, or performing current state assessments. Working with customers to initially establish their virtual infrastructure reporting requirements, Xtravirt creates tailored, automated reports which can then be provided as an on-going subscription service. Advantage Engine helps our customers obtain the precise data they require, no matter what backlog of other operational priorities might exist, and removes the requirement to invest in on-premise tools with associated maintenance costs.

A specific "Analytics" unit, capable of rapidly processing tens of millions of points of data, is built into the infrastructure. Through its powerful manipulation tools it can rapidly target precisely the information required and automatically translate it into easy to digest tables and charts.

The "Report" module interfaces with the Analytics unit and includes a comprehensive and integrated word processor which enables us to create customised and automated reports. These can be generated to a wide range of standard formats including MS Word, PDF, and web, to suit customer requirements.

In order to enhance our services, enabling better value and ROI to our customers, we have built a number of features in to Advantage Engine, including:

- Deep analytics – powerful built-in analytics module that rapidly gathers, stores and shapes information across millions of point of data
- Lightweight and agile – all-in-one architecture means no need for customers to provide any third party supporting software or infrastructure
- Single pane of glass – brings in key information from multiple systems for a centralised view of the software-defined data centre
- Agentless architecture – connects to multiple vendor systems through an agentless process which non-disruptively collects data

- Reporting – over 350 pre-built tables and charts allow us to rapidly generate customised reports. An on-the-go editing function, and a powerful integrated command line tool also allows the scheduling of automated reports
- Secure by design – SSL communications between Advantage Engine and the infrastructure means that data transmission is robustly secured between end-points.

All these features combine to provide our customers with many key benefits, including:

- Customised reporting without investment in purchasing, developing and maintaining management or data intelligence tools
- Unified intelligence across the software-defined data centre
- Removal of guesswork from key IT decision making with timely and accurate information
- Expert assessment and interpretation by our experienced consultants.

Furthermore, Advantage Engine differs from its competitors in several ways:

- Technology agnostic – gathers data from diverse technologies, including compute, storage, network, management, and applications
- Highly extensible – its modular, multi-adapter based approach provides a straightforward platform for new adapters to be created by Xtravirt developers. This means that Advantage Engine can dynamically move with the IT market without being locked into a single use case
- Lightweight and portable – its built-in data collection, analytics and report editing functions mean no extensive infrastructure, third party databases or document processing tools are required
- Reusable and customisable library – its extensive library of hundreds of pre-defined analytics is enriched every time a new metric, chart or performance indicator is created, enabling rapid repeat assessment for the same or other customer infrastructures.

Advantage Engine was successfully utilised in an engagement with an award-winning global architecture and design practice who wanted to:

- Establish a baseline of their environment by completing an inventory of their estate and conducting a health check
- Identify how the environment could be optimised and enhanced to allow future expansion.

Using Advantage Engine, a report was automatically produced to provide the client with information on:

- Computer usage, memory and CPU in machines to allow the customer to see where resource was being used and any wastage
- Realistic benchmarks for storage and memory so in future the client can see where these need reducing or increasing
- Current storage levels, enabling a plan to be put in place to maximise the current system and give them confidence in decisions for future projects.

Why nominee should win

- Xtravirt has a reputation and history of improving efficiency through automation of manual tasks, continuously investing in improving and developing software, processes, frameworks, and methodologies specifically for the needs of virtualisation.
- Xtravirt's Advantage Engine is a modular, highly extensible infrastructure that unifies and harmonises unstructured data, enabling organisations to gain a rapid, cohesive insight to their IT investment and to make informed management decisions, unlike anything else readily available in the market.
- Advantage Engine is an Xtravirt technology that will be used inherently within Xtravirt's engagements to bring the benefits of reduced project timeframes and faster ROI for the customer.