



What's Your Favorite Analytics Term?

I was not expecting the big response I recently when I posted a question to about a dozen LinkedIn Groups that span the analytics/business intelligence market. I was looking for a “branding idea” to describe analytics where near instantaneous visibility of meaningful analytic data and key metrics could be broadcast to a wide audience of corporate users, including web-based intranet views and to mobile devices.

I'm not a software marketing guy (at least not any more), but was looking for a fun and descriptive title to use on some new projects we are seeing in our rapidly-growing consulting practice.

I received nearly 100 responses from these various groups. It was clear that some folks really put a lot of thought into it and wrote paragraphs as to why they liked their ideas. Others didn't put in quite that much effort but had some catchy (and a few weird) terms for what I tried to describe.

My Favorite Suggested Names—What's Your Vote?

Analytics Now
Pervasive Analytics
Active Analytics
Right Now Analytics (RNA)
Pulse Analytics
Right-Time Analytics

Full List of Responses

Listed below are all the responses I received, but I did not repeat those that were duplicate or near-duplicate responses (there were a lot of those). I am also posting the “raw comments,” but left off their names since I'm not sure of the privacy rules of LinkedIn.

Analytics Right Now “How about Analytics Right Now, Analytics Now, Business Analytics Now, or Current Analytics?”

Pulse Analytics “How about Pulse Analytics (as in measuring the heartbeat of the organization)?”

Live Analytics "I am someone who likes to call things what they are and I shy away from calling an old dog by a new name. Everyone gets confused especially the dog. I think what you are describing here is operational reporting. Not very buzz-worthy I know but operational reporting has always been about the current view of what is happening on the floor of an organization whether it's manufacturing, retail, shipping or really anything. If your organization already has a reporting structure with something called operations and they summarize it into weekly, monthly, year to date etc., then you can distinguish this new current data set as well, let's see, how about 'current'. If 'current operations' is not buzz-worthy enough and does not have enough life, then you could call it 'live operations'. If at all possible avoid the word analytics as it's an overused and often misplaced word. Analytics are the output analysis performed by analysts. We build information systems that support analysts. However, if what you have is a metrics system that does the analysis and delivers an indicator that management acts on without further analysis and you've laid off the analyst, then too bad for them because 'live analytics' may be just what you have."

Dashboards Done Right "What you're describing is not new at all, and it's not a trend - it has been around for decades. Unless I'm missing something, what you're describing is a dashboard (not to be confused with a scorecard). If you're looking for the marketing spin, then perhaps, ""Dashboards Done Right.""

Big Understanding "Steven, there are very few business operations that require real-time or near-real-time measurement of company financial performance. Manufacturing, supply-chain... are different beasts that can benefit from this. IBM uses ""Information on Demand""; though I think they should have used ""Insight on Demand"". To rebrand that for the Big Data hype, IBM has ""Big Insights"". Most BI companies use ""Real-Time Analytics"" or ""Real-Time Insights"". So the rules of branding lead us to 2-3 words. I've coined the term ""Big Understanding"" as my poor attempt to differentiate between data as transformed into insight, but I have to admit, the IBM label rolls-off-the-tongue-better..."

Real-Time Analytics "If you are producing valid analytical output ""on demand"", the phrase that comes to my mind is ""real-time analytics"". That phrase, however, has a connotation that the analytics need to be real-time because they are constantly changing. While this may be the case, I would think that the volatility of the analytics would be dependent on the range of sampling being used to drive the analytics. Maybe ""on demand"" is that better phrase to use. It is a more general overall phrase and is not tied to the types of analytic processing being performed..."

"I agree with James, ""real-time analytics"" is what you are describing, the data in itself could be called ""Occurrent"". Mark, I like that. Heatbeat Data. We will give new numbers, in a heartbeat..."

"I'd suggest ""RTA"" or ""Real-Time Analytics"", and I would define it as ""Business Analytics that is sufficiently immediate to enable a meaningful business reaction to data""."

"I have heard it described as ""right-time"" analytics instead of real-time. You don't always need things in near real-time. Some operational metrics are near real-time, some are daily, weekly, yearly, etc..."

Just In Time Analytics "I often refer to Just in Time analytics. This is an allusion to the principle of just in time ordering applied to supply chain management which is an example of analytics in action.. "

Performance Dashboard "I am not sure if creating a new ""branding"" adds to the glamour of analytics, but what you described is part of a classic quality system. I have heard this type of monitoring referred to as a ""quality window"", ""performance dashboard"", ""metrics monitor"", etc."

Live Analytics "What you describe seems foundational for a much larger, global project known as the Global Nervous System -- see

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3K990kVLS0>

""Planetary Skin Institute will research, develop and prototype an approach to provide near-to-real-time global monitoring of environmental conditions and changes. This will deliver the required decision support capabilities to manage global resources and risks"" Singapore Live! also overlaps with this effort -- see

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aEPkyOBtRo>

""The real-time city is now real! The digital revolution has layered a vast system of cameras, communication devices, microcontrollers and sensors over our environment, enabling entirely new ways to imagine, monitor, and understand our cities. These systems have a value that goes beyond their original purpose: the digital exhaust of cellular networks reveals social and economic patterns, tracking systems highlight global material flows, and digitally managed transportation fleets address a city's mobility. Taken together, the impact of digital networks on cities will be as significant as any past human undertaking.""

The Institute for the Future documents much of the high-level planning around these big data efforts -- see <http://www.iff.org/home/>

Poke around these links and you will find that the buzzwords have likely already been created. ""Live"" analytics appears to be the already-created buzzword, IMO."

Analytic Alignment "Since the goal is to allow all employees to see key metrics and ensure their activities are aligned with appropriate activities to support the enterprise, why not ""Analytic Alignment?"""

Right Now Analytics (RNA) "I like ""Right Now Analytics"" for the RNA acronym which let's you use catch phrases like ""it's in our blood"" to talk about being a data driven organization. There's also an approachability to that phrase that is pretty unambiguous and doesn't contain words like ""operational"" which are pretty open ended. Fun topic to talk about!"

"I agree.. RNA makes for an appealing acronym. I note that this concept really defines the promise of a ""dashboard"". While driving one really doesn't care about the oil pressure metric value from last week. It's right now that matters."

Information Exploitation "Information Exploitation (IX) is really what I want to advocate. Use the skills, experience, tool sets, and creativity (while following best practice) to visualize (our organizations) data in such a way that our audience/stakeholders can not only come to a data-driven decision, but actually exploit the opportunities that perhaps were not immediately obvious."

Analytics Now! Or Now "NOW is a good term, like mindful living, Google Now and Sprint's Now network. In a way, it is as simple as "'Pulse of the Business'" now, made more "'visible'". Let us keep brain storming.."

Situational Awareness "In the security and emergency services businesses (military, ambulance, police) where real-time viewing of information on mobiles or large displays is critical - the predominant buzz word is "'situational awareness'"."

Red Dress Data "When you're inside, you look around, what do you see? - Morpheus. What you are describing is clearly 'Red Dress Data.'"

Intimate Analytics "Intimate Analytics - fostering the creation of an intimate relationship between people and their data, where the barriers to understanding are as low as possible and the process of gathering information and gaining insights is as frictionless as possible."

KISS: Enterprise Analytics "What happens when executives want to actually increase key metric visibility in the form of having monitors all throughout an organization where targeted employees (maybe even all employees) can see what's happening in the company, right now?' How about 'Too much and too frequent information to be actually actionable' analytics? No, there's not an acronym there, I just don't see what a real time dashboard, published to everyone, is going to achieve? Saying this, there is a need for computers to do things based on real-time data and if it's pure operational process analytics then great (for the specific set of people and computers who are responsible for it - i.e., monitoring some physical process that might be disastrous if it broke - absolutely). But what signal does (say) real time sales or trading or purchases or web interactions or tweets give a person, and how do you separate that signal from all the noise? And if you're publishing to everyone, who's going to take action? Better to slow the data down and aggregate to a level that provides better evidence and cuts out the noise."

StreamInsight "Microsoft calls it StreamInsight--analytics derived from complex event processing in near real time."

Analytics for Tomorrow "I would recommend something like "'Analytics for tomorrow'" - with a slight contrast to your viewpoints for "'Right Now Analytics'". Analytics gives a view on what has happened so far and triggers a thought for what could be the best course going forward. If I go through your other recommendations, they all support sequentially a life cycle of analytics (or say maturity levels of analytics) and its use. Live streaming of analytics makes the foundation for monitoring analytics. The quality and content of monitoring analytics help you engineer operational analytics - in the form of KPIs and metrics. The rightful design of today's KPIs, with due diligence done handle noises that your business would have, makes the case for tomorrow's predictive

analytics. So what next....the ambit of investment for today's analytics efforts which gives you predictive notion(s) must foretell what you need to do now for a better tomorrow. Tomorrow matters - no matter what you have done so far. It is for tomorrow's concern that drove you to do so much to know today. Isn't it? Hope this makes sense."

Active Analytics "Short and sweet. It has the alliteration needed for a good catchy buzzword. Active has dual meaning - it has the word act, symbolizing action/actionable, and active also means powerful (i.e. active ingredient). Plus, it's vague enough so that marketers can spin it to suit their needs (you know, like 'big data'). I will full credit from whomever writes the first book. :)"

"I like the Active Analytics term. It fits with the classification schemes people have in their heads. I'd like to put a different slant on this and use a term that can go broader than the buzzwords used in our discipline. I propose the term ""Notifier"" to describe any active notification of a specified measure. A notifier for a change in forecast, or a notifier warning of a potential backlog in orders would be the way people want their information. The follow on would allow the notifyee to examine specifics on how the issue arose and if there are causal factors they can address."

"Many industries have adopted the ""Dashboard"" analogy applied to their BA. You might have seen these as add-ons to excel, but there are others that apply it directly to active databases and even incoming data streams to display the rate at which something flows (cash, product, sales, whatever) or raw volumes."

"There are so many buzzwords currently out there right now that most get lost in the marketplace. I find it best to keep it short and simple. Although I do like the Active Analytics suggestion. Perhaps maybe Live Analytics? "

Other Analytics "Names" without comments by the author include:

Data Now
Vital Signs
Heartbeat
A-Now-Lytics
LiveStream Analytics
Pervasive Analytics
Analytics4All
Instant Analytics
Notifier

Authored by Steven Crofts, Director of Marketing and Business Development
www.StatSlice.com

Mr. Crofts has been around data warehousing, business intelligence and analytics since the mid-90's. He was the former CEO and President of The Data Warehousing Institute, which he sold to 1105Media in Los Angeles several years ago. He likes to write about the importance of real business intelligence.

For More Information

For more information about StatSlice Systems products and services, call (214) 206-9290 or email us at info@statslice.com. Please visit us at <http://www.statslice.com>

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