



Complex decisions don't need to be complicated

Whitespace is empowering
decision-makers with more
thorough, more relevant data

by Josh Young

5-minute read

Blind guesses should never be made in a boardroom—or in fact, any room in a business. Before coming to a decision, the relevant facts and details should be weighed and considered. But when all you have at hand is outdated data at best—or no data at worst—choosing the right path forward becomes extremely complicated.

Unfortunately, this lack of insight is far too common across industries, and IT solutions firm Whitespace was facing this challenge with one of its customers. “We were engaged by a



department within the UK government around what they called ‘the Excel problem,’” recalls Andrew Webber, Chief Marketing and Revenue Officer for Whitespace. “Basically, this department has an annual spend of billions of pounds spread over 400 different projects where they’re working with external partners.

And a lot of the information around these projects was held in Excel sheets on various people’s laptops and legacy systems.”

He continues: “So whenever leaders had to make strategic decisions about dialing up or down investments, there

was always a mad scramble to find all of the relevant data, given it was all over the place. And secondly, it meant that day-to-day transactional decisions made about these projects were being made in isolation—they'd have no clue about any ripple effects.”

When thinking about how to help its client resolve this challenge, Whitespace utilized a tool that it had developed years earlier—Expert Augmented and Automated Machine Learning Intelligence, or “eamli.”

“eamli was actually the brainchild of one of our co-founders, Paul Jenkinson,” recalls Webber. “Paul had a background in finance, and as he worked as an investor, he saw again and again how SMEs [small and medium-sized enterprises] were being asked to build financial models and revenue and pricing forecasts with limited information. So, using his expertise with

Using real-world data, eamli can conduct

millions

of simulations in just seconds

From a common interface, users have a

360°

view of relevant data

Excel and his limited coding abilities, he built an early version of the tool.”

After Whitespace was founded, the business further developed the

offering; however, with a limited install base, the company's developers had focused on other solutions, meaning that eamli wasn't yet mature enough to handle a project of this scope.

High tech meets high tea

Finding the means to update and augment eamli happened thanks to a chance meeting over tea with the Prime Minister. Perfectly normal.

“We were invited to Number 10 Downing Street,” recalls Webber, “to a garden tea party hosted by Theresa May and the Department for International Trade. They had gathered big tech companies and high-growth tech SMEs—including another of our co-founders, Andy McCartney—to hopefully spark some discussions. And it was there that we met IBM and instantly hit it off.”

Recognizing the capabilities that IBM technology could deliver, Whitespace quickly chose to become an IBM



Business Partner and to enhance eamli with [IBM Cloud Paks](#) and [Red Hat® OpenShift®](#).

The updated solution delivers a data-driven decision intelligence tool,

backed by advanced machine learning built from a genetic algorithm. “Pulling data from all of the investment and resources attached to it, eamli creates a 360-degree view of all projects and programs that are currently live,”

adds Webber. “All of the data is in one place, so decision-makers can plan accordingly.”

“It also allows users to create a sandbox where all of their projects and programs exist,” he continues. “So they can start to run ‘What if?’ simulations—in real time—against their current data to see what would happen if they made budget or timeline changes. With eamli, they’ve got effectively three million plus data scientists and business analysts running through all the simulations at the same time in less than a second.”

Red Hat OpenShift serves as the primary development environment for eamli, while the IBM Cloud Paks—particularly [IBM Cloud Pak® for Business Automation](#) and [IBM Cloud Pak for Data](#)—help with data governance and integration, quickly connecting relevant data sets and client systems. And to support the instance for the UK government, the firm deployed the offering within a containerized instance of [IBM Cloud®](#); however, eamli is cloud-agnostic, able to support whatever platform a user chooses.

To simplify the use of the IBM technology within its offering,

Whitespace signed an [IBM® Embedded Solution Agreement](#) (ESA). “It gives us clear advantages from an engineering and roadmap perspective,” notes Webber. “By being able to embed IBM Automation directly into eamli, we can more quickly connect the required data and deploy for our customers. And since we’re a fast growth company, we like to have a clear understanding of costs and opportunity. Within the ESA, we have a fixed-price royalty fee for the IBM technology, which is powerful for us as we look to grow to scale.”

“ [B]y being able to embed IBM Automation thanks to the ESA, we are able to more quickly connect the required data and deploy eamli faster. This means that our customers, in turn, achieve their desired ROI in less time and we can accelerate our own sales revenues.”

Andrew Webber, Chief Marketing and Revenue Officer, IBM Business Partner Whitespace

The right decision

With eamli in place, decision-makers across the business now have a consolidated view across projects and systems, empowering them to make faster, better-informed choices. And the collaborative, low-code platform allows users to create and vet simulations without needing comprehensive programming knowledge.

“They now have far more effective decision-making driven by their own data,” adds Webber. “Thanks to the IBM Cloud Paks they have a 360-degree view in one place, so anyone—from someone at the edge of decision-making at the most transactional level right up to the most strategic leadership level—can make better-informed decisions through a natural, easy-to-use interface.



Smarter decisions will be made in less time. Budgets will go further.”

Beyond the direct benefits to its existing user-base, Whitespace also sees clear

advantages in its choice to become an IBM Business Partner and sign an ESA.

“We don’t want to be worrying about the infrastructure—the plumbing, if you

will,” adds Webber. “And frankly, by being able to embed IBM Automation thanks to the ESA, we are able to more quickly connect the required data and deploy eamli faster. This means that our customers, in turn, achieve their desired ROI in less time and we can accelerate our own sales revenues.”

“We feel that we’re better together,” he continues. “With IBM’s go-to-market support for ESA Partners, we can rapidly scale our offerings to penetrate new industry segments and rapidly test and deploy new use cases for industries where we’re already active. Add to this the global IBM footprint, and it’s clear that Whitespace’s ability to grow is significantly enhanced by our partnership with IBM.”

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IBM Business Partner Whitespace



About Whitespace

IBM Business Partner [Whitespace](#) (external link) is a team of researchers, engineers and technologists—along with a few former chief technology officers (CTOs)—who collaborate with businesses to design, develop and build new ideas, products and ventures.

Solution components

- IBM Cloud®
- IBM Cloud Pak® for Business Automation
- IBM Cloud Pak for Data
- Red Hat® OpenShift®

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